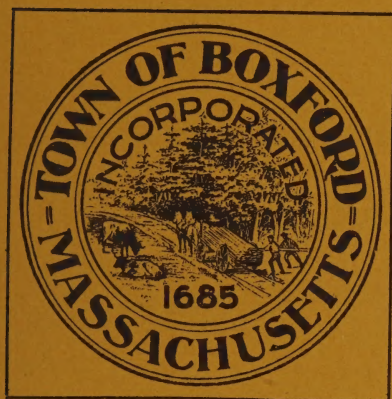


TOWN OF BOXFORD MASSACHUSETTS

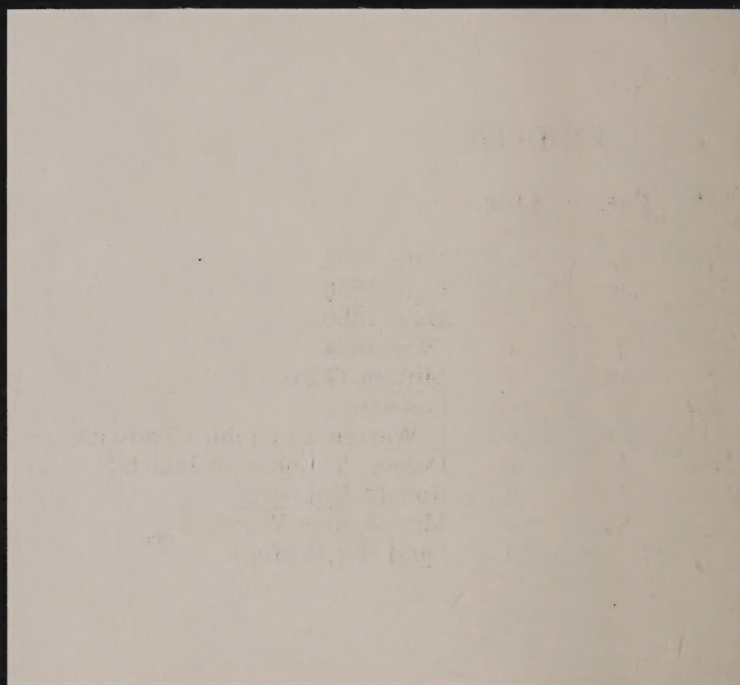
1685-1985



A fragment of History

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44	3	6/7	business
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74	1	4	Mrs. <u>Arthur</u> Woodbury
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TOWN OF BOXFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

1685 - 1985

A FRAGMENT OF HISTORY

Prepared in celebration of
its 300th Anniversary

Miss Barbara C. Perley
Mrs. Carlyle W. Thomas
Miss Katherine Phillips, Editor

Introduction

This narrative was composed to record briefly the beginnings of Boxford, its life-style, the values that existed in early years, and the effect of that background on the Boxford we know 300 years later. The small farming community was bound to move into the future, but much of its heritage is still evident. It was the people who shaped the town, and it will be the people who continue to, uniting to retain open space, clean air, pure water, and the peaceful tranquility of a small New England town.

Appreciation

Warm thanks are owed to many people who contributed to this history. They prepared entire sections of material, shared their personal documents, and gave time to typing or to tracking down an obscure bit of information. They made the book possible.

Mr. William Andrew (Topsfield)

Mrs. J. Warren Chadwick

Mrs. Sidney Chadwick

Mr. Kenneth Chadwick

Mr. Damon Dustin

Mrs. Ruby Benson Gould

Mr. Richard Hopping

Miss Margaret Lane

Mr. Stanwood Morss

Mr. and Mrs. Simeon S. Pearl

Miss Helen Phillips

Mr. Richard Shaw

Mr. Richard Spofford

Mrs. Robert Rafuse

Mrs. John Truman

Mrs. Dorothy Woodbury

Early History

The history of Boxford is cherished by its residents in part because the early standards of faith, industry, and thrift are still apparent in the community. Family names of a hundred years ago still appear on our voting lists and church rosters, and succeeding generations serve the community in many ways.

It is not possible to prepare a meaningful report of the past 25 years of change and growth that moved so swiftly in Boxford without looking back—if briefly—at its earlier history. A great deal of material is available at our libraries and in the Document Center in West Boxford. Sidney Perley's *History of Boxford* has been twice reprinted, and his *The Dwellings of Boxford* was updated to 1976 by Barbara Perley and the late Winnifrid Parkhurst.

On November 26, 1960, a "birthday party" was held to celebrate the 275th anniversary of Boxford's incorporation. A booklet of history was prepared for the occasion by Miss Margaret Lane, Mrs. Milton Lord, Miss Ruby Nason, and Miss Esther Perley. Permission to use material from their book has been invaluable and warmly appreciated.

Settlement and Incorporation

John Winthrop's land grant in 1683 for the settlement in Ipswich ran north from the Salem boundary to Ipswich, then inland to the Merrimac River, and back to the ocean along a line part of which is now the North Andover-Boxford boundary. The Agawam Indian tribe that occupied the area was not aggressive; they were hunters, farmers and fishermen. Their Sachem deeded his rights to all this land for 20 pounds.

The following year, 1639, a group of about 60 newly arrived families left Salem, located in an area between

Ipswich and Newbury, and bought for 800 pounds the land that now includes Rowley, Bradford, Groveland, Topsfield, and Boxford. The Town of Rowley was chartered in September of 1639, and about a year later six men made their way west to what is now Boxford. They laid out six parcels of land of 30 acres each, between Fish Brook and Pye Brook. They maintained their ties with Rowley, continued to contribute to the minister's "rate," and called their settlement Rowley Village; but they also attended and helped support the Topsfield church, which was closer.

By 1685 there were as many as 48 families in the settlement. They sought a separate charter so that they might build their own meetinghouse and settle a minister in the community, they "being sensaball of the great need of having the public word of God preached among us...for the betor edication of our children that cannot gooe fouer mieles to meeting." With the consent of the Rowley selectmen, the separate Town of Boxford was incorporated on August 12, 1685. Until the new meetinghouse was completed in 1701, town meetings were held at William Foster's public house, situated on Topsfield Road to the east of the large red house, number 20, until recently the home of the late Mrs. Gerrit Fort.

In this same year (1701) Masconomet's three grandsons, Samuel and Joseph English, and John Umpee claimed rights to the Boxford territory. An appointed committee met with them at the home of Lieutenant Thomas Perley, located on the present Route 97. The site of their agreement was marked for many years by an elm tree set out for that purpose in the late 1700s. The tree stood for many years, but was badly damaged by Dutch Elm disease and was cut down in 1962. Masconomet's grandsons drove no harder bargain than their grandfather. They settled with the town for "silver, rum and vittels enuf" and signed with their respective marks a formal deed with description of the boundaries of the 12,000 acres then within Boxford. This deed also included the rights to water courses, fishing, hunting and fowling, and to trees and timber woods. Some changes were made

later in the boundaries, land being annexed to Middleton in 1723, and to Georgetown and Groveland in the 1800s. In 1808 land was annexed from Rowley, and in 1846 land from Ipswich was added to Boxford.

The description of the area's original limits includes many reference points, to trees such as "a white oak," or "a wild pear tree," and "eight-mile tree," which was a bound mark between Andover and Boxford, "as it hath been perambulated." Granite posts were put in later at points where the lines changed direction. These posts are perambulated once every five years, officials of abutting towns gathered together to locate and mark on the stone the year on which they have confirmed the line. It is interesting to note that some of the boundaries with Georgetown are marked with an "R" because Georgetown had not yet separated from Rowley and been established as a town. Similarly, some of the bounds with North Andover have only the "A" for Andover—which at the time it still was.

When I-95 was reconstructed and widened the Topsfield-Boxford marker was deeply covered by the grading, to the point that some people thought it was underneath the highway. It was in the vicinity of Lockwood Lane, and although it could not be found, the importance given to these historic markers is demonstrated by the fact that state and county engineers and representatives of the two towns were all involved in the survey to assure replacement at the proper location.

Church History

East Parish

"Zeal for the house of God was the origin of the Town of Boxford," and the town had been incorporated for that purpose. Land, however, was not definitely agreed upon for the building of the meetinghouse until 1699. The work was completed, and the building was accepted by the town in 1701. It stood in the "northerly

corner" of what is now the village cemetery in the East Parish. The Rev. Thomas Symmes, at the age of 23, was called to be the minister. He was given a yearly salary of 60 pounds, a house, 10 acres of land, and 35 cords of wood a year.

From 1701 on, town meetings as well as services of worship were held in the new meetinghouse, until a separate parish was established in the western part of the town with its own meetinghouse and parish officers.

In 1745 a new meetinghouse was built on a site in front of the present church. The Rev. Elizur Holyoke was ordained pastor in 1758, and two years later his father built for him and his bride the home now called the Holyoke-French house. Mr. Holyoke was much interested in music, and in the summer of 1777 the church "began the public Worship with Singing by general desire." Mr. Holyoke's son, Samuel Holyoke, became a distinguished composer and was probably instrumental in having "Exhibitions" in the meetinghouse at least three times—1798, 1806, and 1807. The singers filled the balconies, and people from throughout the county came in teams, on horseback, and on foot.

The present church building was completed in 1838, the old meetinghouse having been judged the year before to be in great need of repair. The "basement story" of the new building, or vestry, accommodated town meetings and all public gatherings until the town hall was erected in 1891. General Solomon Law gave the bell that was to be hung in the belfry. New horse sheds, built on the north and west sides, were maintained and repaired over the years, so that the westerly ones, which still stand, are in constant use for storage of a variety of things, including outdoor play equipment.

The pipe organ was not installed until 1885, replacing an old pedal organ. Earlier, in 1843, a bass violin and clarinet were played in church.

The Rev. William Symmes Coggin was ordained in this church when it was dedicated and was pastor for 30 years. Another minister ordained here was the Rev. Emery L. Bradford who was pastor for 22 years. Like his predecessor, he continued to live in the village the rest of his life. A number of other ministers serving First Church were ordained here over the years, but it was not until 1970 that a woman, Miss Pamela Cole, was ordained in First Church, although she was never minister here.

The building has undergone a series of changes in recent years. First the "basement story" was rebuilt to accommodate a modern kitchen, a larger dining room, and a minister's study. By 1966 the ever increasing Sunday school was growing so fast that an addition was built to enable all to be in session at one time. This addition also provided meeting rooms, a library, and needed offices. The family of John Quincy Adams gave in his memory a much-appreciated carillon that can be played manually and is also programmed to play hymns at noon and at six o'clock.

Organizational changes have also been made in recent years. First Church, along with many other Congregational Christian churches, joined the Evangelical and Reformed Churches to become the United Church of Christ. It also reorganized its own structure. The First Congregational Church, the First Parish, and the Corporation established by the Trustees of the Ministerial Fund merged in 1964 and became one body—First Church Congregational of Boxford.

In June of 1975 the First Church received by bequest of Elizabeth Barnes Sawyer the house at 1 Middleton Road. Miss Sawyer had visited her grandparents in Boxford as a child, and in the early 1950s she returned here to live in the house that had once been owned by her great-uncle, Phineas Barnes. (See *Updated Dwellings of Boxford*.) Restoration and repairs were made, and the house is now the church parsonage.

Many members of the congregation are active in the program known as "Our Brothers' Table" in Lynn. They provide and serve one meal each month for the homeless or hungry and also contribute clothing and food to the Kingston House in Lynn, which gives shelter and assistance to the needy.

The spiritual life of the church has deepened due to a strongly committed membership and the leadership of the present pastor, the Rev. Mr. Stuart Nutter.

West Parish

In the early 1730s the population in the west part of Boxford had grown sufficiently to build their own meetinghouse on a lot south of the "new" Brookside Cemetery, thus assuring that they would be able to attend services regularly without the long and sometimes arduous trip to the east meetinghouse. On petition to the Legislature a separate precinct was approved in 1735—the Second Precinct of Boxford—the East Parish then becoming the First Precinct.

The church was formally organized in December of 1736 with 36 members, and the following year the Rev. John Cushing was called to be minister. He continued as minister for 36 years, with a salary in the early years of 140 pounds and 25 cords of wood annually. Bringing in the minister's supply of wood occasioned one of the community's few holidays. Since the work was begun very early in the morning, at about 10 o'clock the men would go into the house to get warm and have "something to take."

When a new church was needed in 1774, it was decided to measure the roads to determine the center of the second precinct and build the church there. Thus the second church building was erected near "Rocky Point" where the Civil War monument now stands. The second meetinghouse was taken down in 1843, and a new one built in the same location. It cost \$4,917.62.

Mr. Charles Saunders, a parish member, presented a bell for the church, which was bought in Boston and cast by a former apprentice to Paul Revere.

A pipe organ was given to the church in 1887 by Benjamin Hale, and a significant event in 1961 was its complete renovation by the Andover Organ Company. In 1963 Mrs. Harold Richardson gave the chimes which call folks to church after the usual bell ringing.

Through the efforts of the Rev. Donald Rosenberger, 1961-1967, work was begun in 1964 on a new wing to provide for the needs of the larger congregation. It was completed in the spring of 1965 and provides a large hall and a modern kitchen for gatherings, fairs, programs, and the like. A pastor's office, study, and Sunday School rooms are part of the new addition.

Mrs. Merton Barrows, president of the Ladies Charitable Society, founded a branch of the society called Koinonia for the benefit of young women unable to attend afternoon meetings. In 1971 the Couples Club engaged the Nasons to serve a chicken barbecue on the church lawn, and it became a yearly custom thereafter.

In 1973 the church ceased to be a Parish and was incorporated; the treasurer and trustees were empowered to transact financial affairs.

The Rev. Norman B. Crook became part-time pastor in the fall of 1974. He is executive director of Bethany Homes for Seniors in Haverhill, but finds time to lead the congregation to a better understanding of how we can care and share in our time and place in history.

Church members entered into a covenant with Pastor Crook so that lay people share in meeting the needs of the church.

Mr. Crook lives nearby, in Groveland, and does not need the parsonage, so the Board of Christian Concern looked for missionary scholars to live next door to the

church. In 1978 John and Eva Rugayo and their three children from Zimbabwe, Africa, took up residence in the parsonage. The church family and the Rugayo family enjoyed an exchange of lifestyles during their stay. John was ordained in Second Church on February 15, 1981, and shortly thereafter the family returned to their homeland.

A population explosion has been felt in the church as well as in the number of residents in town since 1960 when the town was 275 years old. The church membership has grown from 171 in 1960 to 322 in 1983. It is a very special feeling to have the church filled with the enthusiasm of new young families making Boxford their home.

The Sunday School rooms in the new wing ring with the exuberance of the 80 or more youngsters learning their bible lessons from dedicated teachers. Also Village School West, a non-profit nursery school, branch of Village School East, began in September, 1982, to conduct weekday mornings for 3 and 4-year old children in these same Sunday School rooms.

The church is really a functional gathering place for all, including the Tuesday Friendship Club meeting on the second Tuesday of each month and a Drop-in Center on the fourth Tuesday. Some of the ladies have met on Wednesday mornings for over two years to do quilting. Regular meetings of Ladies Charitable Society and Koinonia expand the list further, and a warm welcome is extended to folks to join in these activities.

Church members have been involved for some time now in the Bread and Roses program to provide food for the homeless and the hungry. They have provided and served a meal for about 120 people on the first Monday of each month and aspire to add a second day. In addition, some have made time during holiday seasons to visit and try to cheer those who are without home or family.

Information about the Second Church was amassed by Elizabeth Pearl, wife of Simeon Pearl, a life-time resident of Boxford and for 41 years its tax collector. The two celebrated 70 years of marriage in September, 1984. Boxford must be a good place to live!

Trinity Church of Boxford and Topsfield

Early in 1957 at the request of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, the Massachusetts Council of Churches made a survey in Topsfield and the eastern part of Boxford to see what the religious condition of that section was. The survey report indicated that 129 residents expected to attend an Episcopal Church, 68 more were "uncertain", and, interestingly enough, roughly one quarter of the population of the area was without any religious affiliation of any kind.

On May 27, 1957, a group of Episcopal clergy and laymen met at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Gardner Norton in Topsfield to decide whether or not to establish an Episcopal Church. The consensus of the meeting was "by all means," and the formal service of inauguration was held in the Congregational Church in Topsfield on July 18, 1957. Within a month's time permission was secured for use of the Linebrook (Congregational) Church facilities in the west end of Ipswich; land for a future church site was offered by Mr. William A. Coolidge of Topsfield; and a choir was organized. On September 8, 1957, regular services were begun with Archdeacon Donald R. Noseworthy preaching.

Late in October of that year the full time services of Reverend Herman T. Silvius III were secured for the mission. During 1985 committees met concerning the construction of a permanent group of church buildings. The people of the Parish pledged almost \$117,000 and Mr. Coolidge pledged to match any paid contributions. Construction began in the fall of 1959, and the first

regular service of worship (including Church School) was held on Sunday, October 23, 1960. Dedication by Bishop Anson P. Stokes was on January 22, 1961.

An interesting note is that the unpainted brick above the cornerstone, on the northwest corner of the church, came from the parish church in Topsfield, England, a 13th century building still in use. However, the vestry of that church thinks it may be one of the "new bricks" dating from repairs in the 16th century.

The statuary in the courtyard of the church depicting the Gethsemane scene was contributed by Mr. Coolidge and dedicated March 26, 1966.

The church was consecrated and the mortgage burned Sunday, June 14, 1970, with the Bishop John Melville Burgess officiating. The Rt. Reverend Henry Knox Sherrill, former presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in the United States, preached the sermon.

The new rectory was completed in March 1972 and has been occupied by the Silvius family since that date.

In the summer of 1978 the Rev. Cynthia P. Hubbard joined the Parish as associate minister. In February 1979 she was ordained a priest in the Episcopal Church and continues her duties at the Parish.

Industries

From the time of its first settlement in 1635 down through the next two and a half centuries, the principal occupation of the inhabitants of Boxford was agriculture. By patience and hard struggle with the rocky soil of this region, these early settlers eked out a bare existence in some cases, while others prospered so well they became comparatively rich. In 1875 the state census listed 125 farms in the town, with 6,158 acres of improved land. Indian corn, rye, barley, buckwheat, oats, potatoes, turnips, cabbage, cranberries, and hay were raised.

In its early history Boxford had many small industries. One of the first of these was the gristmill for grinding corn, which was one of the principal crops. The first saw and gristmill that ever existed in the town was built shortly before 1700 by William Peabody. It was located west of Georgetown Road. The many streams and ponds in the town furnished locations for other grist and sawmills. The one on Lowe's pond near the old depot was operated by Charles Chaplin as late as 1960. It is now owned by Charles Killam.

Other industries included the following: in 1669, an iron works; in 1725, a tannery; in 1767, a potash manufactory or leachery; in 1790, iron smelting; and in 1795, blacksmithing in many locations. Many households included among their buildings a "ten footer," which designated the usual size of a home shoe repair shop. Early boot heels were fastened with nails, which scratched floors when the boots were new. When the boots wore down, the pointed nails then scratched the feet that wore them. Invention of pegging machines for shoemaking originated in this immediate area and was so successful that it spread rapidly from town to town. Shoemaking was an industry in 1800.

The old-fashioned spinning wheel and loom were introduced in 1758 and were widely used to produce clothing, thus avoiding the taxes of Great Britain. A hundred years ago a group of women from the Perley and Gould families were making quantities of straw bonnets of rye straw. These were shipped to New York and then back to Boston, where they sold as English bonnets.

In terms of the number of employees, the largest industry ever carried on in town was the manufacture of matches. In 1867 a large factory building was erected for the necessary machinery. This was on Fish Brook, and the factory turned out about 5 million matches per day. They were shipped to Boston to be dipped before being sold. Twenty men were employed and about \$40,000 worth of matches were turned out annually until about 1895. The dam that provided power for the match

factory was washed away in 1905, but one of the original houses, for owners or superintendents, was continued as a residence at 8 Lawrence Road. It was purchased in 1905 by Mrs. Florence Harriman. Her daughter married Fredrick H. Bond, who was an architect. He prepared plans of this house and others for the U.S. Department of the Interior's Historic American Buildings survey.

In about 1864 mining for silver was undertaken in several places in the West Parish, but there was not enough value to continue. However, this industry led to the beginning of a wheelwright, blacksmithing, and wagon industry for J. Horace Nason, who came from Andover to care for the mining tools. His first shop was built on what is now Brook Road. When this building burned, he built a new three-story building on Washington Street. Wagons of many kinds were manufactured and sold from there, and his son Alfred later built automobile bodies. This business came to an end in 1955.

Agricultural pursuits and usual home industries continue in Boxford, but there is no manufacturing.

Roads and Transportation

During the first hundred years, travel in Boxford was by foot or by horseback. The early custom of "warning" town meetings was for the constables to walk from house to house throughout the town, telling each voter the date and place of meeting and the articles in the warrant. In 1652 the General Court ordered that a highway be laid out from Ipswich to Andover. This was the first road in Boxford and was called "Old Andover Road" (now the Ipswich Road). A road to Newbury (now Highland Road) was laid out at the same time. In 1668-1669 a road was laid from Topsfield to the Merrimack River at Haverhill. Several more roads were laid out after the incorporation of the town, and two more in 1710.

In 1717 the town voted to repair the highways, and the right was given to each highway-taxpayer to work

out his part of the tax, if he desired to do so. For this work, the following rates of labor were adopted by the town: "Those that labored from the beginning of May till the first of September shall have two shillings and six pence per day; and from the first of September to the end of the year, two shillings per day; and one shilling a day for a pair of oxen, and six pence a day for a tumberell or cart." In about 1790 pathing snow became necessary because wheel vehicles and sleighs were becoming more common. Prices of labor advanced. The town voted to allow a man seventy-five cents per day for repairing the highway, a yoke of oxen, forty; a cart, twenty; and a plough, forty per day for work repairing the highway.

By 1799 a number of people in the East Parish were assessed by the town for a chaise, and a chaise house, and owned horse sheds at the meeting house. We know that in the first quarter of the nineteenth century the stagecoach came through Boxford once a week, going from Danvers to Haverhill along the Old Andover Road.

For many years transportation was available by trolley car for people who worked out of town or for young people attending schools in Andover, Byfield, or Danvers. The trolleys were powered by overhead electric lines and ran on rails that, except within the towns, were laid on sleepers at ground level. On highways such as the present Route 114 they presented a hazard for automobile drivers. There were turnouts along the line for trolleys to pass one another.

One such line ran from Haverhill, with cars leaving every half hour, to Georgetown. Every hour a trolley left there along North Street to Byfield and Governor Dummer Academy and thence to Newburyport. This line was used to reach Plum Island for Sunday School picnics or other outings. A special trolley was provided for such groups.

Another line used by Boxford residents originated in Danvers and ran to Andover and Lawrence. In order

to use it, however, residents had to make their way to Howe's Station on East Street in Middleton. These trolleys were still running in the 1920s, but the tracks were not removed until many years later.

Plans were made at one time to run a trolley line along Route 97, but it never materialized, perhaps because of the railroad which in 1854 started running through East Boxford from Danvers to Haverhill—a great advantage to the town. "It meant not only facilities for transportation of freight and express, but regular mail service, a means of travel, and shipping of large quantities of shoes and matches then made in Boxford, as well as wood, lumber and agricultural products." It permitted young people to obtain a high school or college education in another place, and it attracted business and professional men from Salem and Boston to make their summer homes in Boxford.

The Boston and Maine Railroad bought this branch in 1859. Three trains a day each way were running in 1853. By 1900 there were five a day each way. But in 1940 automobiles had taken over transportation to such an extent that the two trains a day were little patronized, and on December 16, 1941, the last train stopped at the Boxford Depot.

Pathing, or breaking out, a road in winter provided passage, although sometimes narrow, for a horse and wagon or the occasional automobile. A sleigh or pung might be tipped over, or a car might slip from the path in winter, but it was an early thaw that was hardest to deal with. There were few paved roads or driveways, and once the ground had thawed no wheeled vehicle could be used without the risk of being deeply mired. This was mud season. Thirty years ago many roads were opened only to the farthest dwelling. Herrick Road, for example, was plowed only as far as Miss Herrick's house (now #6) or perhaps, later, the old cider mill next to it, and from the other end less than half a mile to what is now the Gingrande home, where the plow turned around in the driveway.

Highway Surveyors were Clinton French and B. Robert Cunningham, who served for over 30 years. These two men and a crew of helpers worked steadily to clear roads after the 1954 hurricanes, the first of which was Carol in August. Falling trees had brought down the power lines, closed roads, and damaged buildings. Power lines were not completely in operation until two weeks later. Connecticut and Rhode Island had been heavily damaged and crews came from as far away as Indiana to help restore the lines. Generators were located and used to pump gasoline; with the roads open, it was possible to buy needed equipment, even ice, by travelling to Boston. A second storm, Hurricane Diana, came through two weeks later, but was not so severe. In February of 1969 there were two 18-inch snowfalls 9 days apart; but snow is an accustomed challenge, and the highways were cleared quite readily by the highway crews.

It would appear that transportation is not wholly in our hands in New England (or elsewhere) even with our modern roads. A gasoline shortage resulted in car-pooling and later contributed to the coming of a commuter bus line to Boston in 1974.

Growth

The census records indicate that the population increased steadily from that early group of farming families until it stood at 1,020 just before the Civil War. A decline followed until it was reduced to 625 by 1930. In the last 30 years increased use of automobiles and improved roads made the town more accessible. By April 1960 the population had reached 2,004, nearly double the 1930 figure.

During the next 10 years it doubled again, reaching 4,000 by 1970. Asked about the impact on the town, Selectman Chairman Harry Lee Cole said, in 1961, "We wish the growth weren't quite so fast, because it is a lot

harder to plan and visualize what will be needed." His statement reflected the foresight that had long been a part of Boxford's life-style and government.

Travel to nearby cities had been made easier by completion in 1951 of Route 95 through Boxford. Employment opportunities abounded within easy traveling distance; the State Capitol and Boston's wealth of cultural activities could be enjoyed, as well as the recreational opportunities of New Hampshire's lakes and mountains. Attracted by the tranquillity and rural nature of Boxford, newcomers found a wealth of other benefits close at hand.

It is not suprising, then, that the town has continued to grow rapidly. As of January 1984, 90.2 miles of town roads served a population of over 5,000. It is probable that over 5,500 residents will share in Boxford's tercentenary celebration.

Although Boxford was bound to grow with the improvement of roads and automobiles, the completion of Interstate Route 95 through Boxford in 1951 had the greatest impact. Prior to that time travel by car from Boston northward was via the Newburyport Turnpike, also called Boston Road. It was a rolling two-lane concrete highway and in the 1920s and 1930s was considered quite dangerous. There were no breakdown lanes, few guardrails, and certainly no access ramps. It took a valiant man to make a left turn onto Route 97 to get to Topsfield or Boxford.

With the coming of I-95 Boxford's lovely countryside was "discovered." Its open land, ponds, and woodland attracted many young people looking for a home site. Half-acre lots were permitted until 1953 when minimum acreage was increased to one acre. In either event, they cost less at that time than a 10,000 square foot lot in most Boston suburbs. Many pilots of airlines based in Boston, and Bruins hockey players (and their friends) became permanent residents. Young engineers and rising

executives came to Boxford, often only to be transferred within a year or two.

House lots were sold along existing roads, but inevitably, with so great a demand, new roads were laid out in open land to provide more home sites. The first of these, Silverbrook, was developed in the early 1950s on land formerly the Silva Farm. It ran from Topsfield Road through to Lockwood Lane and accommodated about 17 homes. The developer was Ivan Bauer.

Individual lots were sold along Depot Road by the Kelsey family. They later laid out a loop of dirt road, part of which has frontage on Lowe Pond. Most of the lots here, on Sunrise Road, were purchased without houses on them. Not only did the owners plan and arrange for the building of their new homes, but they also paid to have the road hot-topped.

Woodcrest Road and other new neighborhoods began to appear also in the 1950s, but the largest was Kings Forest, built on the Chester Killam pasture, which fronted on Route 97. Land and houses were sold along the existing road, and Lindsey Perry planned the new roads that gave space for over 60 homes. The planning reached beyond the Georgetown/Boxford boundary and provided the opportunity to build Canterbury Apartments, a town house complex almost entirely within Georgetown.

The two-acre lot with 250 feet of frontage came into existence in 1955 and helps maintain the country appearance and atmosphere. Growth continued steadily, largely in the easterly part of the town, until the late 1970s when the Swift development was started in West Boxford. Further growth is foreseeable in the future as long as there is buildable land. The Building Inspector's report showed the start of 52 houses in 1983 and 69 in 1984.

For many, Boxford became their cherished hometown. Over the years they have given freely of their time

and skills to benefit the community. They served on study committees and held time-consuming positions on school committees and on other boards, and still do. Competent and caring residents do much to benefit the town, informing themselves on the matter involved, attending area meetings, and reporting to the selectmen their activities or recommendations.

Government

Church and State were one in the early years, and town meetings were church meetings—attended by freeholders and "other qualified voters." In 1911 Massachusetts was the only New England state to allow "school suffrage" to women. Town records of 1908 include the names of 19 women. However, full voting privileges were voted down by the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1910 by a vote of 47 to 148.

When the town was divided into two parishes in 1735, an annual town meeting was held on the first Monday in March and the location alternated between the East and West Parishes. Candidates were voted upon in the morning and dinner was served at mid-day. During the afternoon warrant articles were debated and voted upon. Full suffrage for women was enacted by the Federal Government in 1919 and ratified by Massachusetts in 1920.

By 1950 many more residents were employed out of town and could not absent themselves from work for a full day, so it became necessary to change to a night meeting. Thereafter meetings continued to alternate between east and west ends of town, in the First Church or at Lincoln Hall, until completion of the Masconomet High School building in 1959. Its auditorium provides seating for 600 people, adequate for most meetings, but when a controversial or very important issue is on the warrant attendance swells, albeit only until the particular article has been voted on. Some voters arrive late and leave as soon as the issue that concerns them has been

disposed of. In early days being late would have cost them a fine of sixpence; failure to attend earned a fine of a shilling.

However rapid Boxford's growth, its character changed relatively slowly because of the continuity of office holders who year after year put their skills and experience to use for the benefit of the community.

It has been noted earlier that in order to become a separate town it was necessary to petition The Great and General Court for a charter. Similarly, approval of a second parish within the town had to be justified and approved by the General Court.

However old or young, whether rural or suburban, each town and city is part of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and subject to its regulations; each is accountable to the State and is beneficiary of its help. Boxford's incorporation in August of 1685 far preceded the Massachusetts Constitution, dated 1780. The United States Constitution was not completed until December of 1787. Massachusetts ratified it the following February by a vote of 187 in favor to 168 against.

The Massachusetts Constitution was the first ever to be drawn by a convention of delegates and is the oldest surviving original charter. It still includes some language from the 1628 Massachusetts Bay Colony Charter and the Province Charter of 1691. The title "Commonwealth" is used by few states. The early English "weal" is interpreted in part as safety, spiritual and personal well-being, and also "felicity."

Until recently towns' bylaws were reviewed by the Attorney General's office when voted, but at present only zoning bylaws are so studied. Schools and libraries receive funds from the State if they meet State standards.

Assessors and Taxes

The reaction in this country to taxation without representation made history. Taxes continue to be a major concern to those who must pay them and to those who must rely on them for money to run the government, at whatever level, State or Federal, as well as municipal. Until 1908 the selectmen were also the assessors. In colonial days taxes could be paid in corn or other produce, and in 1717 the opportunity was given to a highway-taxpayer to work out his part of the tax by working on the highways. Although selectmen determined the rates—and there were many rates—such as the minister's rate, a rate to purchase ammunition, a rate for any public improvement—constables were the collectors. They were paid three pence on the pound collected, and delinquents had to pay one third more.

The State poll tax, assessed to males 21 years of age and over, originated in the 1700s and was not repealed until 1963.

The Diamond Match Company factory on Lawrence Road was the largest taxpayer in the 1800s. The factory and buildings were valued at \$2,000 in 1855, and \$3,500 in 1881, but all operations ceased in 1904 and the buildings were valued at \$390. There were five windmills in 1904, valued at about \$150 each.

In 1971 the assessors revised or confirmed valuations on all buildings by on-site determination of the dimensions of homes and outbuildings—a return to the methods of the 1700s. The Stewart Mapping Company was engaged in 1972 to make aerial maps of the town, which was a great assistance to many departments and also helped the assessors locate open land which had not been recorded earlier, and determine its use.

Boxford's tax rate on buildings for many years stood at under one-third of current value, but in 1974 the

Commonwealth decreed 100 percent valuations in all towns and cities. Data on buildings was already recorded in the assessors' files, but classification of parcels of land and developing a formula for the several categories was a difficult and time-consuming job. Boxford's assessors undertook the revaluation themselves, with outstanding success.

James Warren Chadwick was an assessor from 1947 until 1975. He resigned in 1975 and died in November of that year. Chester K. Twiss had become an assessor in 1963 and resigned 10 years later. John R. Benson, assessor from 1970 to 1976, was chairman when he resigned for health reasons. These men had built well, and with the help of Mrs. Norman (Mary) Meeker and Miss Barbara Perley, new members met the challenge. Mr. Twiss returned in 1979 to help, but died in 1981. Mrs. Meeker was appointed to the Board that year. Mrs. Betty Ann Lehmann became the first woman assessor elected. She took lengthy courses to inform herself of the intricacies involved in meeting State requirements. Her co-workers were Leo April and Clinton French, a long time resident, who is still on the Board. Mrs. Lehmann resigned in 1979 when the family moved out of town. Mrs. Donald (Joan) Behrens was elected in 1982 and continues with this difficult job. The third member, in 1984, is Charles Nichols.

The lowest tax rate in the town was \$5.00 per \$1,000 in 1906. There were 214 dwellings that year. The tax rate for 1985 is set at \$13.78. The 1980 census reported 1,608 houses, and many more have been built in the past four years. Boxford's tax rate has for many years been among the lowest 20 percent of the State's cities and towns.

The Moderator

Moderators are elected officials, standing for re-election each year. The town has been fortunate to have had residents with the patience, skills, and stamina to

continue in this exacting and tiring post, particularly when three consecutive nights may be needed to dispose of the warrant articles at the annual meeting.

An early moderator was Chester Killam, who served from 1925 through 1934. He was followed by William J. Greenler, who also served for nine years, and was succeeded by his son, William Greenler, Jr., who at the same time was the first designated Town Counsel. He held those positions ably for 30 years.

Our current Moderator, DeWitt Minich, who had previously been Finance Committee Chairman, was elected in 1976. Donald J. Scutiore is Town Counsel. Both men face a far more challenging situation than could have been imagined 30 years ago. Meetings extend late into the night, and there is often need for a special meeting during the year, which may be about a hotly contested issue or be so mundane that there is concern about gathering the necessary 50 qualified voters to make the meeting valid.

The annual Town Meetings are now broadcast over Masconomet's radio station WBMT—88.3 on the radio dial. The young students who broadcast the proceedings and fill in spaces when there is a conference or other interruption are very professional, and people who are concerned but cannot attend the meeting can hear it "live" in their homes.

Schools

Boxford, in compliance with an order from the General Court, engaged John Peabody to be "SCOWEL MASTER" in 1701. He was probably Boxford's first school teacher, using a room in various houses throughout the town. He would hold classes for about one month in each house, and in most cases this would be all the schooling the children of those times would receive. There were several to follow Mr. Peabody in this position, including Thomas Perley and Nathaniel Peabody.

In 1716 the town hired Thomas Jewett "To teach scoul for writing Reading and Arethemitick to the 6 parts of ye Town Ye town is for give him forty shillings pur month for ye six months & convenient Diat & Lodging."

At a town meeting in 1739, it was voted that the town would divide into five parts, each part to provide its own schoolhouse. Whether all five of these schools were built at this time is not known, but it is known that an old schoolhouse stood previous to 1765 on part of what is now Harmony Cemetery, and in 1774 another stood at the junction of Ipswich and Valley Roads.

Soon after 1791 there were six one-room schoolhouses in different locations throughout the town as follows:

District One was located on Lockwood Lane. This schoolhouse burned down in 1815, and a new one was built a little to the east. Building and land were sold in 1919 and converted into a residence. This building today stands at 61 Lockwood Lane.

District Two was located around 60 Main Street, on the south side, and was probably one of the original five. The old school was replaced in 1845 with a new one that served this town very well. In 1931 it was discontinued and sold at public auction. A short time later it was moved to 33 Main Street and given back to the town as a community house. Now, 140 years later, the same one-room schoolhouse is being used as an art center.

District Three had a beginning on the corner of Ipswich and Baldpate Roads and probably was one of the original five. Some time before 1765 this district was moved to what is now Harmony Cemetery. In 1869 the building was sold and removed. At this same time a schoolhouse that stood in District Four on School Street was discontinued and moved to Ipswich Road directly opposite Harmony Cemetery to become the new schoolhouse of District Three. In

1931 it was sold, and today it stands at 110 Killam Hill Road.

District Four started out on School Street near Ipswich Road, not far from Howes Village. The old school was replaced with a new one in 1851, and the district was discontinued in 1864. The building was moved to District Three, and the fourth district number was given to a schoolhouse in West Boxford.

District Five was on the north side of Ipswich Road where it meets Valley Road and probably was one of the original five. The old building was replaced in 1797 with a new one that served the district until 1864 when the district was discontinued. This building was sold in 1869 and moved near to 190 Main Street where a second story was added to become a residence. Some time later it was moved to Fry's Corner (Middleton and Main), and then in 1947 the building was moved to 125 Georgetown Road where it still stands. This district was reinstated in 1882 with a new schoolhouse of that year, the last one-room school that Boxford would build. This made the third building built in this district, it being located on the south side of Ipswich Road instead of the north as previously. The building was sold in 1931, moved to 103 Washington Street, and made into a tea room. The following year it burned flat.

District Six was at the junction of Oak Ridge and Lake Shore Roads in the triangle. This building had a life of forty-five years before it was discontinued. Later, in 1934, a new schoolhouse was built for this district on land given by Mary Tyler Day, who also gave granite for its foundation, at the junction of Main Street and Lake Shore Road. This district was discontinued in 1931, and the building was sold.

District Seven was built in 1840 at the junction of Washington and Main Streets on the very spot where Lincoln Hall now stands. It was changed to the Fourth District in 1869 when the original Number

Four on School Street was discontinued. Thus the Seventh District was to be no more, with a short life of 29 years.

As early as 1897 it was felt by some that Boxford should consolidate its schools—have one school in a central location with two classrooms, one for the primary grades and one for the grammar grades—or move two schools close together, instead of six small schools scattered all over town.

In 1901-1902 this was tried out. Districts One and Three were closed, and all those in grades one through four from Districts One through Three went to District Number Two. Those in grades five through eight from Districts One through Three went to a room in the Town Hall that was temporarily made into a classroom. It was hoped that a new school building would be built in the village area. But the town voted no; so in 1903 Districts One and Three were reopened, and Boxford was back to six one-room schoolhouses.

In 1912 another attempt was made to consolidate, this time in the west end of town. Number Four school was moved to a new lot, given by Gardner Morse, at 188 Washington Street. The building was raised, and a new classroom was built underneath. The top floor of the building was used for grades six through eight from the entire west end, and the bottom floor was used for grades one through five from the immediate village area. This new system worked well, allowing the first five grades to receive a better start and providing much better conditions to prepare grades six through eight for high school.

In 1914 all schools lost their numbers and took on names: No. 1 was called Andrews (was discontinued); No. 2 was called Palmer; No. 3 was called Aaron Wood; No. 4 was called Gardner Morse; No. 5 was called Kimball; No. 6 was called Mary Tyler Day.

One person who saw a need to educate the children of West Boxford past the eighth grade was Jonathan Tyler Barker. In 1883 he left in his will \$30,000 to do just that. His wish was carried out in 1888 when a beautiful school building was built at 607 Main Street. Any student from West Boxford who could pass the exam to enter high school was admitted free of charge. This school was called the Barker Free School. It operated for 30 years and was closed in 1919, resulting in the students being bused to Johnson High School in North Andover. Over 100 years later the interest from Mr. Barker's legacy is still helping West Boxford students.

In 1919 Boxford took advantage of a School Transportation Act passed by the State in 1918 to help towns with large areas and small populations get a bus program started. With this assistance from the State, Boxford was able to bus its students to neighboring towns on a regular basis. Many families saw this as a positive program and sent their children to high school also.

Consolidation came to Boxford Village and East Boxford with the building of a new school at 30 Middleton Road. It was called the new Aaron Wood and opened its doors in January 1931. A beautiful red brick building with two classrooms and a small conference room, this was the first school with indoor plumbing and mobile furniture in the classrooms. Desks and chairs in all previous schools were screwed to the floor, and before 1880, benches were commonly used. This school building was converted into the Town Hall in 1982. The last of Boxford's one-room schoolhouses was sold in 1931. The town was completely consolidated and busing was in full swing.

In 1939 the Gardner Morse was sold, and construction of a new one began on the same site. It was called Gardner Morse also and opened its doors in 1941. This was another beautiful brick school, with two classrooms and a small conference room. The building was converted to a library for West Boxford in 1972.

The two-classroom schoolhouse became obsolete in the early fifties with the effects of the building and baby boom that followed World War II. Over the next twenty years Boxford would enter into programs to build a regional junior and senior high school with Middleton and Topsfield and build thirty-three elementary classrooms before the pendulum would swing the other way in the mid-seventies.

In the early fifties, construction was started on the Cole School to the rear of the Aaron Wood. It opened in January of 1954, adding six new classrooms to a very overcrowded system. This was Boxford's first school with an auditorium and a kitchen to prepare hot lunches. The auditorium made possible the development of a physical and recreational program for those attending, and an ideal meeting place for town organizations, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and town meetings.

In 1956 Boxford joined Middleton and Topsfield in a regional junior and senior high school program. The site and name were picked that same year, and on September 14, 1959, Masconomet Junior and Senior High School was opened for grades seven through twelve. The enrollment in October of that year was as follows: Boxford, 193 students; Middleton, 274 students; and Topsfield, 301 students, for a total of 768 students.

The total cost of the building was \$1,816,615.42. With the junior high students going to Masconomet in the fall of 1959; that was the last class to have eighth grade graduation exercises.

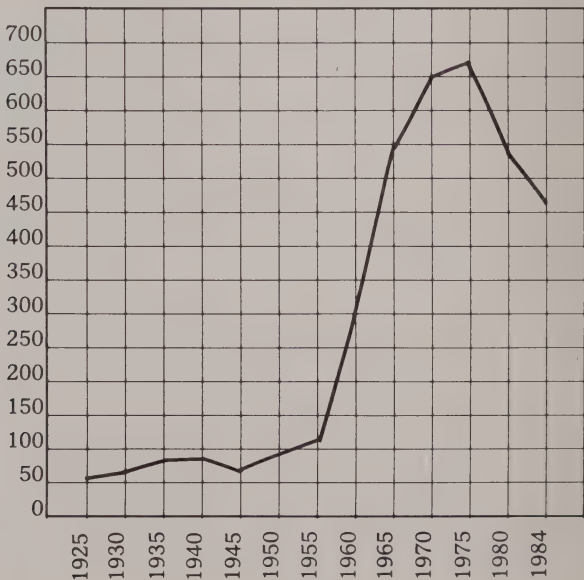
In 1960, when the Cole School was only four years old, work began to add on seven more classrooms, and one year later they were all in use. In these difficult growth years, the school department used all available space for classrooms, such as the basement in the Gardner Morse School, the stage at the Cole School; and even the Little Red Schoolhouse, which once served as Number Two, was put back to use.

It was decided to build an addition to Masconomet and use the addition for the seventh and eighth grades only. Work began in 1963 and it was opened for class November 16, 1964.

Boxford was growing so fast in these years that as new classrooms were being built it was realized, even before they were completed, that they were insufficient. So, instead of adding on to schools at each end of town, the thinking went to centralization. Land was purchased on Spofford Road, halfway between the two ends of town. In 1963 work began on a ten-room school building. It was finished in 1964 and dedicated September 20 that same year. This school was designed so it could be added to very easily. This was done five years later to make Spofford Pond School a twenty-room school building.

Some points of interest: Boxford's teachers received the right to bargain collectively in 1966, and the Boxford Teachers' Association was chosen and recognized as the bargaining agent. In 1970 public school kindergarten was started. In 1972 Gardner Morse was turned into a library. In 1982 Aaron Wood was converted for Town Hall use.

Graph: Sixty years growth of Grades 1 through 6; 1924-1984



The North Shore Regional Vocational School District was developed in 1972 to meet needs of students from 16 communities, its purpose to provide career oriented education. Ms. Jane Langton and Kennth Littlefield represented Boxford during the planning. A total of 31 meetings were held between January 1 and the vote of acceptance by residents of each municipality on November 7. Boxford continues its membership, represented by Mr. Charles Knisely.

School Funds

The Hon. Aaron Wood established the first school fund in 1791. He bequeathed to the town for the support of a grammar school the income of his house and other buildings, and his real estate. The sales ground and buildings of the Highlands Nursery occupy a part of the Wood farm. Additional bequests have been received from the "Widow" Sarah Chadwick, Ephraim Foster, and Mary Kimball.

Mrs. Frederick H. Bond (1880-1972) lived for many years in Boxford at the Match Factory house at 8 Lawrence Road, which her mother had purchased in 1905. She had great affection for the community and was interested in young people and their education. Her choice of name for the fund, *The Perley-Parkhurst-Cole Trust Fund*, was an appreciation of the friendship and concern shown for her during the 49 years she lived in Boxford. Annual income is disbursed at the discretion of the Selectmen.

Libraries

The first library in Boxford was named the Boxford Library Society and was initiated by a group of men and

women in 1796. Its members contributed some of their own books for circulation and contributed funds for purchasing new ones. Books could be taken out only at the quarterly meetings unless earlier exchanged at the librarian's convenience. Only the librarian was permitted to remove a book from the shelf. This society lasted over 50 years.

The Boxford Public Library, which still exists, was founded in 1873. Books were purchased with subscription funds and a room was rented in what is now the Dechene home at 15 Elm Street. The house was owned in 1873 by the Ayers family, and Mrs. Lizzy Ayers was the first librarian. In 1880 this association was incorporated with the expressed purpose "to support and promote free library service within the town of Boxford." The charter cost \$5.00. The corporation then purchased the nearby Bacon house, directly across the street from the present village store, for \$155. It measured 12 x 20 feet. With the later addition of an old shed and children's room, it served the community's needs until 1940.

Perley's *History of Boxford* records that by the 1860s both churches had libraries of over 200 volumes. In both parishes, however, residents felt it was important to increase the number of books and to encourage wider use. In 1881 the Reverend Charles Hubbard proposed creation of the West Parish Library Association. He also suggested that the dog tax money received from the county be used to help support libraries. It was so voted that same year, and each library received \$47. In later years, when Seth Kelsey was a library trustee, he would rise and formally move that the odd penny—if there was one—"be given to the west library, the east library having received the previous penny," or vice versa.

By 1883 George Davis, a member of the association, purchased the small building that the Reverend Calvin Park had used for a private school. When the library group was incorporated in 1900 as the West Boxford Public Library Association, Mr. Davis deeded the land

and building to the new association. It was the home of the library for 47 years.

In 1930 Dr. Walter Renton Ingalls designed and had built a brick library building which he modeled after the 1730 Knowlton house. The Parish made land available, and the Ingalls Memorial Library, built in memory of his daughter Catherine, was presented to the Association. Constructed for library purposes, it served residents very well for over 40 years and now, as a historic document center, provides research material for people from all parts of the country.

The importance of reading and of making books available was recognized then as it is now. In 1905 Miss Bessie Cleveland, who was in charge of the east library for 9 years, arranged with teachers to have books left with them for use by the students, and in 1909 two branch libraries were opened in the East Parish, one in the village store and the other at the railroad station. Mrs. Perley Killam and Miss Bertha Perley were in charge of them. Miss Bertha Perley became the first "book-mobile" by transporting books as well as passengers to and from the depot. She became the town's first paid librarian in 1911, for \$25 per year. She held the office happily for 53 years, with modest salary increases from time to time.

The East Parish library moved in 1939 from the Bacon house to the Cummings house next door. Built in 1841 as a residence, it was adapted for library use and provided spacious quarters for the newly varnished books brought over by a brigade of 10 men, who carried them in numbered boxes to the ladies waiting to shelve them.

Miss Cummings had bequeathed the house, barn, and land to the association in memory of her mother Julia Ann Cummings, together with a sizable book fund. In 1944 it was voted to have an appropriate sign made designating the library as "The Julia A. Cummings Library Building" so that she would be remembered and

her generous gift acknowledged in the future. Mrs. Lucy Alcott had earlier bequeathed to the association an abutting piece of land so that there was generous space for library related activities or for expansion of the building when needed.

In 1925 voters had approved setting aside for the libraries \$5,000 from the Town Farm Fund. Its original purpose was to serve as a nucleus for funding new buildings, but it was changed several times. In 1930 it was separated into two accounts, the interest to be expended for the benefit of the east and west libraries. As public libraries freely open to the public, they qualified for some municipal help, but most of the libraries' costs were met by fund raising events of many kinds. A card party was an annual event in the East Parish (and still is), and a busy thrift shop brought in money at the West Parish. The old ways persisted; no money was spent for what could be done by staff, trustees, Friends of the Library, or Boy Scouts. Shrubs and plantings were given, and people with special skills such as carpentry gave their time or worked at very low rates. Library operations were very much a community project in the 1960s.

By 1960 the State Regional Bookmobile was visiting both libraries. The wide range of material offered for all age groups was a major contribution. In addition, the books had been processed and catalogued when they arrived, and only "borrowed" the shelf space which was already beginning to appear inadequate at both libraries. Four to five thousand books were withdrawn and circulated in 1965 from bookmobile selections.

Mr. Eliot's Master Plan in 1962 suggested a central library at the proposed town center. The library trustees in 1965 wanted a further study of the town's library needs, and Peter Race, then chairman of the Boxford School Committee, asked that the schools' libraries be included, volunteering to share in the costs. The review was done by Miss Putnam of the Andover Library and Miss Steele, librarian in Fairhaven. They recommended

new facilities either in the villages or at the center. The cost of their study, meetings with trustees, and written report was \$300.

Although both libraries exceeded the State's standards for books per capita, both fell short of other requirements such as open hours or staff members. Trustees were aware that current library needs could not be met by the two private associations, even with town help. Trustees of the libraries worked closely to coordinate service townwide. Their efforts qualified Boxford to receive a grant from the new State Aid to Libraries in 1961, its first year. The amount was based on population, 25 cents per capita, and amounted to \$450 that first year. In the 1980s the town receives well over \$2,000.

In 1966 it was time for town management of its libraries. Mr. Lord had prepared the way and at a special town meeting in December of 1965 the Boxford Town Library, a municipal agency, was voted into existence. At the time state law required that the number of trustees be divisible by three. The first trustees elected were six from the two associations and three candidates at large. The private associations leased their buildings and collections to the town for a dollar a year. Roles were now reversed, from private libraries aided by the town to a Town Library operating with assistance from the private associations.

The benefits were many. The libraries had telephones for the first time. A new well and indoor plumbing were provided for the east library. The town's first professional librarian, Mrs. Selma Schaalman, assumed her duties in September. They included helping coordinate and expand the libraries at the Cole and Spofford Pond schools. When Mrs. Schaalman resigned in August of 1969, Mrs. John (Ruby) Benson was appointed town librarian. She had worked for many years with Mrs. Rounds at the west library and was a very able administrator. Books never traveled more freely or faster between the two libraries than during her ten years as town librarian. Tri-town school and public librarians

formed a group for exchange of information and cooperative buying when possible.

Library activity expanded dramatically, and only two years later, in 1969, a proposal was put forward to enlarge the Ingalls Memorial Library by adding a large room behind it. The neighboring Hildebrand family offered some needed land, and many residents supported the project. However, the vote at town meeting was to renovate the unused Gardner Morse School building. Demolition and renovation began in April of 1973, and the library was moved to its new quarters during August by staff, Friends, and volunteers.

The next proposal was scheduled for 1976/7. A thorough study was made by Kenneth Schaffer, a librarian and planner of international repute. He studied the town and its growth, met with residents and with the school superintendents, librarians, and students. The Cummings building had twice been closed for repairs and changes to accommodate the weight it now carried, so trustees worked swiftly to develop plans to submit to voters. Miss Cummings' home could, almost all architects agreed, be converted, the Alcott land was available, as was land at the town center. After numerous public meetings, the three options were put before voters at a town meeting in May of 1978, and a new building at the town center was approved. A petition was circulated the following month for a special town meeting asking for referendum questions in 1979 and for further study of the east-west libraries by the Planning Board.

As in the case of the west library expansion, opinions differed, the referendum passed, and the Planning Board retraced the steps of the library trustees with different advisors. Sincere and very ardent groups formed around three concepts: the resource center, the neighborhood library, and "preserve the Cummings building." The degree of interest and depth of feeling for each is documented by the greatest-ever town meeting attendance at

a special meeting on a hot June evening in 1978. A large majority of the 649 voters voted to remodel the Cummings house. A building committee was appointed and the town went to bond for the proposed construction. The private trustees had received Probate Court permission to transfer the property to the town when the funding had been voted. The transfer accomplished, 20,000 books made their second trip to West Boxford to await completion of the new library, and furniture and equipment were removed to storage.

On February 27, 1982, hundreds of people attended a gala opening of the new east library. The attractive building and landscaped grounds are much admired and the library well used under the management of the present librarian, Ms. Sandra Small. As before, books may be borrowed or returned at either east or west library, and borrowers, staff and books travel freely between the two villages. Circulation was almost 50,000 in 1984.

The Librarians

The early librarians were also "the staff." They had full responsibility for the books, their circulation, and record keeping. Miss Mary Sawyer, a librarian, classified books at the east library during the very early days. Although the librarians took courses and learned from hands-on experience, such changes as the Dewey Decimal system could not be accomplished without the help of many interested citizens. The State Bureau of Libraries could be asked for assistance and were often solicited for weeding the collections of books no longer useful. Miss Margaret Lane, a librarian and a trustee of the Boxford Public Library, gave many hours of work at the library and provided what were probably the town's first story hours for children. Miss Abby Herrick, a Latin teacher and book enthusiast, gave time and valuable

books. She also left a bequest to the town for the library, which was added to later by Miss Norris, who summered here with Miss Herrick. The libraries were, and still are, a community project in Boxford.

Librarians at the Boxford Public Library were:

Mrs. Lizzy Ayres	1878
Miss Mary Ellen Perley	(dates unknown)
Miss Bertha Perley	1911-1964
and	
Mrs. Robert (Lucy) Parkhurst	1951-1966

Mr. Robert B. Parkhurst was a longtime member of the Board of Trustees.

Librarians at the West Boxford Library association were:

Miss Nelly Spofford	1889-1939
Miss Jeanette Auger	1939-1942
Mrs. Charles Isabel Rounds	1942-1966
and	
Mrs. John (Ruby) Benson	1946-1969

Librarians of the Boxford Town Library—

Mrs. Warren Schaalman	1966-1969
Mrs. John (Ruby) Benson	1969-1979
Mr. Robert Dugan	1979-1981
Ms. Clarissa Heyel	1981-1982
Ms. Sandra Small	1983 to date

The long tenure of some of these ladies is notable—50 years or more for Miss Spofford and Miss Bertha Perley—and not apt to be matched these days. By 1965 each library had a second in command capable of taking charge in the absence of the librarian. Mrs. Vernon (June) Kousky came to the east library as a volunteer in 1965 and continued on staff until completion of the new building in 1982. Mrs. Paul (Marion) O'Brien took full responsibility for both libraries during periods between

librarians. Administrative continuity has been provided by Mrs. DeWitt (Lynn) Minich who started helping with secretarial work in 1973.

Outstanding Men and Women

Boxford has numbered among its inhabitants many distinguished persons for a town of its size. Some have lived in Boxford all their lives; others have been called to far corners of the earth. The variety of their accomplishments has been great. There have been businessmen, traders, farmers, lawyers, teachers, clergymen, legislators, writers, artists, inventors, and manufacturers. Some of the more notable are mentioned here.

Major Asa Perley, in addition to serving as Selectman for ten years, was a member of the Provincial Court in 1775. The Hon. Aaron Wood was a Representative to the General Court of Massachusetts for terms totaling 16 years in the 1700s. The Hon. Julius A. Palmer was both a Representative and a Senator in the General Court in the 1840s and 1860s.

George Washington Atherton (1837-1906), born in Boxford, was left by the death of his father totally dependent upon his own resources at the age of twelve. He worked his way through Phillips Exeter Academy and later Yale College. After resigning from the 10th Connecticut Volunteers due to sickness, he spent four years teaching at the Albany Boy's Academy in New York and at St. John's College, Annapolis. In 1868 he was elected a member of the first faculty of what is now the University of Illinois. A year later he was called to Rutgers College, New Jersey, where he remained for nearly fourteen years. In 1882 he became president of the Pennsylvania State College when there were but two buildings, one a mere shed. There were only 33 students in the classes. When Atherton died after an administration of 22 years, there were more than 30 buildings and 1,200 students in five thoroughly organized schools.

Timothy Palmer, born in Newburyport in 1751, resided in Boxford from 1766 to 1781. He was a famous bridge builder, who in 1797 was issued a patent on his design for the timber arch principle of building. He built the first bridge over the Merrimac, from Newburyport to the Amesbury side of the river. The General Court granted permission in 1791 and the bridge, in two parts, was completed in 1792. He was a resident of Newburyport when he died in 1821.

Henry Oliver Peabody was born in Boxford in 1826 and later lived in Boston. He spent several years perfecting his "Peabody-rifle," an improvement over the earlier breechloading rifles. It was rated by several European weapons committees as "meeting every requirement of a military weapon." The Providence Tool Company in Rhode Island manufactured many for the Swiss government, and Canada also made wide use of them.

Rufus Porter (1792-1884) was a painter, inventor, writer, and the first editor of the *Scientific American*. He invented all sorts of machines, from washing machines to flying machines; a model of his flying machine is owned by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In his youth he decorated the walls of the best rooms in a number of houses in the West Parish; some of these murals are still in existence in the Eichorn residence in West Boxford as well as in houses in other cities and towns in New England.

Alice Freeman Palmer (1855-1902) was President of Wellesley College at the age of 26. She attended the University of Michigan, teaching between sessions. Although family needs compelled her to leave before completing her thesis, she was awarded her Ph.D in 1882. When she came to Wellesley in 1881 there were 375 students, and when she left there were 628. She was married in 1897 to Professor George Herbert Palmer, philosopher, writer, and teacher at Harvard. They occupied the Boxford home which had been in the Palmer family since the 1600s. Mrs. Palmer maintained her interest in education and was a member of the Massachusetts State Board of Education in 1889.

Another outstanding educator was Stuart K. Harris (1905-1969). After his graduation from Boston University, he changed his career goals and returned to gain a Bachelor of Science in 1930 and a Master's in 1932. He returned to Boston University as a member of the Faculty of Fine Arts and stayed for 36 years. While giving "thorough, orderly" lectures in five different subjects, he attended Harvard classes at night to attain a Doctorate in botany. The Peabody Institute published posthumously his *A Flora of Essex County*, which contains a brief biography and a list of his many publications. It is available at the town library.

Dr. Winthrop P. Haynes (1887-1979), a graduate of Harvard in 1914, taught geology at Wellesley College and at the University of Kansas. He was commanding officer of the 13th Photographic Section in Europe during World War I. Thereafter he worked for the Standard Oil Company for many years and in many European and Middle East countries. He married Anna Morse, daughter of Lewis Kennedy Morse. Their two sons were born in Paris. After his retirement in 1948 he was Visiting Professor in Petroleum Geology at Harvard for ten years. He was active in town affairs—for many years as a member of the Boxford Library trustees and the Historical Society, and served on the Conservation Commission as well as on several ad hoc committees.

Bishop Henry Knox Sherrill (1890-1980) and Mrs. Sherrill came to their house at 166 Main Street in 1933 and spent summers here until his retirement, when they made it their permanent home. Bishop Sherrill was ordained in 1914 and went to France with the AEF in 1917. During his 18 months there he shared his quarters with a Catholic priest and a rabbi. Their comradeship lasted all their lives. He was a retired Bishop of the Episcopal church in the United States and had been head of the World Council of Churches during the 1950s.

His high offices and church responsibilities never lessened his interest in people, in pastoral functions, and in preaching. He often attended services at the First Congregational Church. Although notables such as the Archbishop of Canterbury were guests in their home, the Sherrills had equal concern for friends and neighbors, who held them in warm esteem.

Milton E. Lord (1898-1985) had already become deeply interested in libraries and in languages when he graduated from Harvard in 1919. He had a long and distinguished career in his chosen field. After military service he returned to Europe for a year of graduate courses in Paris and later became librarian at the American Academy in Rome. He returned to Rome in 1948 as one of the five Americans who recatalogued the Vatican Library.

During the 33 years at the Boston Public Library he effected many changes. He participated in the building of several branch libraries and in planning the \$24 million dollar addition to the main library in Copley Square. He was President of both the Massachusetts Library Association and the American Library Association and was a member of and participant in numerous European organizations.

Mr. Lord and his wife Rosamond (Lane) moved to the house at 85 Main Street in 1940 where their five children have grown up. Mr. Lord enjoyed the community and country life-style. He was often to be seen splitting wood in front of the barn or grooming the roadside in front of their stone wall.

An early member of the Boxford Public Library, he foresaw the need to combine the two private library associations that existed at the time. His guidance expedited the transition to the unified Boxford Town Library. He was its first chairman, and his enthusiasm for making books "easily accessible" has been a continuing influence on Boxford's library.

In the more recent period there has been a long line of residents distinguished in many fields; Dr. Walter R. Ingalls, an eminent engineer known throughout the country; Dr. Arthur W. Allen, a noted surgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital; Lewis Kennedy Morse, for years Treasurer of Wellesley College; Robert Livermore, a mining engineer in all parts of the world; Harlan P. Kelsey, nationally known horticulturist and active in promoting National Parks; Frank A. Manny, educator and antiquarian.

Among other distinguished residents were William C. Lane, Librarian of Harvard University and a President of the American Library Association; Edward Jackson Holmes, President of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. Professor Franklin C. Roberts combined a career as Professor of Education at Boston University with a multitude of activities on behalf of Boxford. He was a selectman for eight years and on the Regional School Building Committee. The Masconomet High School Library is named in his honor.

Two men above all have represented the quintessence of what Boxford has been and is: Deacon John W. Parkhurst and Harry L. Cole.

Deacon Parkhurst (1862-1959) was Deacon of the First Church in the East Parish for 60 years, from 1895 to 1955, and then Deacon-Emeritus until his death. He was also Town Clerk for 51 years, from 1893 to 1944. Both of these terms of office were remarkable not only for their length in years but even more for the conscientious and faithful fulfillment of duty.

Harry Lee Cole (1882-1970) was a selectman for 61 years, and was Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for all but two of them. He handled the affairs of the town with never-failing astuteness and sagacity. It was in tribute to his qualities and distinguished service that the elementary school on Middleton Road was named the Harry Lee Cole School.

Rural Nature

Concern for Boxford's future was evident as early as 1940, when 14 residents worked with State and County planners to list the town's natural assets. The report included as one asset 10,000 acres of woodland, "the largest acreage of any town in the county." (This despite heavy wood cutting in the 1800s when oak was a cash crop readily marketed at ship building communities nearby.) Dairies, market gardens, poultry farms, and orchards were listed. The town was basically a farming community, although almost 5,000 acres of land were described as "unsuitable for agriculture." A resident phrased the lack of suitability in more memorable language, describing a parcel as "so poor it would make a crow weep to fly over it."

The report, received in 1941, recognized that Boxford was already becoming a residential community and that there was "a good demand for moderately priced homes." A zoning plan was recommended, and the report ended by stating that it was a preliminary study and would be followed up by action, as it was at a special town meeting in 1946.

First Zoning

Members of the study committee for Boxford's first zoning bylaw were J. Warren Chadwick, Avarad Lyon, Albert Gale, Seth Kelsey, Simeon Pearl, Rosamond Price, and William Walsh. A zoning map prepared by the Harlan Kelsey Landscape Architects was included. Two areas at the east and west centers were designated as residential, and a smaller one was shown at the railroad station on Depot Road. Existing businesses were indicated by small black blocks within the residential area. The rest of the town was classified agricultural.

The idea of restrictions on an owner's use of his own land, as proposed in this bylaw, was met with suspicion and the matter was greatly discussed and

debated. A secret ballot (Boxford's first) was called for at the 1946 town meeting. The zoning bylaw was adopted by a vote of 90 in favor and 65 opposed. There were only 15 articles, but they set up soil-stripping controls and also restricted the kinds of buildings to be built in the future, and their use. It also provided for a building inspector and for a Board of Appeals to act under the provisions of the Massachusetts General Laws.

The law imposed no restrictions on existing buildings or uses, and many of the enterprises of that time continued at their original sites for many years.

The Stone House, near the North Andover line, was built in 1845 on the site of an earlier home. Its 72 acres were farmed by James Henry Nason, whose son Clinton inherited from him. Clinton built a new house across the road, and both properties have remained in the family since. Clinton's son Henry now lives in the Stone House and with his wife Ruth ran a very successful catering business until recently. They now sell home made breads and frozen entrees. Their son James lives across the street in "the new house."

William and Iva Paisley have farmed the land transferred to him by his father, James, in 1932. When James bought the land and buildings, there were a gasoline pump and a small lunch stand at the roadside. They utilized the building for selling produce and homemade jellies and breads. An enlarged greenhouse now provides flowering plants and seedlings in addition to the farm products. Son William, Jr., and his wife now share in the business.

Nearby on the same side of the street is Benson's Ice Cream Stand. The house was purchased by William Perley in 1871 and given in 1905 to his daughter Katharine, who was married to John F. Benson. Katharine ran a roadside vegetable and fruit stand for years, and in 1932 established her ice cream business. She continued her enterprise until she was 80 years old, when she "retired" to the small house she had built at the rear of

the property. All family members at some time worked at the ice cream business, but it was her son John who purchased the home and business in 1940. His children ran the business during their college years, and it is now owned and run by son Alan, who is currently a member of the town's Finance Committee. "Grandmother" Benson would be pleased with the continued success of her project.

The Chadwick family owned much of the land in the West center of Boxford. James Warren Chadwick bought the large estate at 665 Main Street in 1875. An early Valuation Book records 75 acres under cultivation, 130 acres of pasture land, and "a little swampland." He operated a successful dairy and market garden for many years, and his son John T. continued the enterprise with the help at one time or another of one or all of his three sons. Successive generations continued agricultural pursuits while giving freely of their time to church and to government affairs. Both John and Everett Chadwick received State awards—John as "Outstanding Farmer of the Year" in 1961, and Everett as "Dairy Farmer of the Year."

The house at 29 Brook Road was built in 1816 as a home for the Harriman family and was for many years. It had been the site of two blacksmith shops and a shoe factory before coming into the hands of William Gemmell in 1913. His son George was the West Village storekeeper and he and his wife continued to run a market garden of fruits and vegetables during his lifetime. The house was sold by George's widow in 1962.

Ingaldsby Farm on Washington Street takes its name from Walter Renton Ingalls, a distinguished mining engineer from New York who purchased the house and land in 1912 and continued to buy abutting land from time to time. In 1927 his daughter Rosamond made her permanent home there and started to develop the present

commercial farm. For a time son Gordon expanded the endeavor to include sheep, poultry, and a bakery which produced apple pies and chicken pies. He also purchased 40 acres of Chadwick land near Hovey's Pond. Each year he has about 125 acres under cultivation, six of them in strawberries. Most of the produce goes to market, but the large strawberry beds and some of the vegetables are opened for public picking.

No commerical orchards exist in Boxford now, but in 1921 Walter K. Morss purchased from the Wilmarth family the house and land at 77 Lake Shore Road; Mrs. Morss received about 40 acres of land from her father, John Myron Pearl, and purchased another parcel from his estate in the 1920s. In 1921 Walter Morss started cultivating selected plants, and his catalogue of the 1950s offered "northern grown plants" of varieties of asparagus, grapes, and rhubarb in addition to the fruit plants now raised and shipped by his son, Stanwood Morss. Only strawberries and raspberries are grown now, the raspberry plant production is the eighth largest in the country. Of the 112 varieties raised, many were developed by Walter Morss and his son Stanwood. Many plants are shipped out each year, but others remain for public picking. There are plenty, says Mr. Morss, to share with the multitude of warblers and other birds that come each year.

The 119-acre farm has been under study by the State Agricultural Preservation Restriction program and in 1983 townspeople voted to share a percentage of the cost if the purchase takes place.

William Ames who owns the abutting Alderbrook Farm hopes to have his 72 acres similarly reserved for agricultural use.

It is surely to be hoped that this productive farmland and the environment it supports can continue in the years to come. Once lost, it can never be replaced.

Harlan Kelsey established the Kelsey-Highlands Nursery at the junction of Ipswich and Georgetown roads in about 1912, and it was later expanded on the other side to include the old Camp Grounds. A trained horticulturist and landscape designer, he grew and sold roses, ferns, evergreens, and a variety of fruit and landscape greens. For three successive years the nursery won top award for Industrial Landscape designs. He played a large part in developing the internationally used *Standardized Plant Names*, the 1942 edition of which is in our library. His sons and grandson took part in the business, and his son Seth carried it on until 1965 when it was purchased by Dr. and Mrs. Simeon Locke. The Lockes continue to care for or replace earlier plantings and add new trees and shrubs. They open the main buildings as a unique Christmas shop each December.

A greenhouse and piece of land near Kelsey Road are leased to Richard Haywood who operates the Bittersweet Corner Garden.

Edward H. Haynes manages a tree farm near his father's home at 57 Main Street and on other family property.

Christmas tree farms were operated in Boxford as early as the 1950s. Dana Cahoon who lived on Topsfield Road near the Boy Scout park was interested in forestry and was probably the first to grow and care for trees for this express purpose. There have been many more since, as families established the tradition of driving out to the country in late fall to select and tag a tree which they return to cut in December.

These, then, are the stories of agricultural and related business that have existed until recently or that continue on the same site, often in the same family. Although there have been many additions to the original zoning bylaw, agricultural and rural activities and customary home or professional occupations have not been restricted.

Whether regarded as a profession or a business, a necessity in a rural community years ago was a slaughter house where livestock could be properly prepared for table use. Ezrael Budnick made his way to West Boxford soon after his arrival from Russia. He lived for a while in an outbuilding at the William Perley home and operated a butchery in a nearby building. In 1907 he purchased "140 acres of land, a house and barn, for \$700, 2 dozen chickens and a buggy."

His son Joseph spent his war years in North Africa as an army meat inspector. On his return he expanded the business with purchased meat, but many nights were spent cutting freezer orders, either of the many deer that hunters brought to him or for people who raised animals for their own use. The atmosphere was social, with wives and husbands wrapping packages to suit their families' needs, but it was hard work and Joe died in 1978. His son Bruce lives in the house at 151 Washington Street, and the business is leased to people who worked for Joe.

Fire Department

A journalist visiting Boxford in early 1896 reported that it was "an exceedingly pleasant place to visit and has good roads." However, in his column in the *Boston Globe*, he noted that the community had no lawyer, no doctor (too healthy to support one), no police (briefly incarcerated in another town for inebriation), and no fire department. Regarding the lack of fire protection, he was advised by Mr. F. A. Howe, proprietor of the east store, that the townspeople would be asked at town meeting to purchase "force pumps." These early Indian pumps were kept in various houses throughout town, because the water in them would freeze if they were kept in an unheated public building. Manpower was used to force the water through the hose and nozzle, and one model was operated by foot pedal. Those carried on fire trucks today are operated by a sliding plunger. A shoulder harness makes it possible for fire fighters to backpack them into a forest fire or other remote location. The first

addition to those early portable pumps was made by Oliver Howe, who gave the town a 1912 Cadillac chassis on which two 40-gallon tanks were mounted.

At a special town meeting in December 1941, \$3,300 was transferred from other accounts to create a State-authorized Emergency Defense Account, which would enable the town to purchase a fire truck and take care of other defense expenditures. The 1942 report by the Selectmen states that a very satisfactory fire truck was acquired and equipped, a new fire station was built, and a Volunteer Fire Department was organized. Necessary items such as boots and rubber coats were difficult to buy during the war years, but equipment was purchased whenever available.

The men who founded the Fire Department in 1942 also established a Boxford Firemen's Association, which had an original membership of 23 men. The Association was a social and support group that attended and hosted musters, met regularly, and is still active. Today there is also the Fire Department Auxiliary, open to all between the ages of 14½ and 18 years of age. Members attend classes under the leadership of a department lieutenant and become trained fire fighters.

In 1950 three sections of Chapter 48 of the Massachusetts General Laws were adopted by the town. These sections of the law established the organization, duties, and standards for the State's fire fighting organizations. The Chief is appointed by the Selectmen, assumes full responsibility for equipment, personnel, and wages and is required only to report to the Selectmen. Although Chapter 48 made the Fire Department a town agency, the west and east departments did not join into one department until 1963. From its rural fire protection character, it was now on its way to becoming a well-equipped and highly-trained force.

The first modern Class A pumper was purchased in 1961, and a second one was purchased in 1962. Two forest fire vehicles were acquired, one by purchase, and

the other at no cost through Civil Defense. The latter, a government surplus four-wheel drive truck, was adapted and equipped by the Department of Public Works to serve as Forestry Two.

During the 1970s, several important new functions were implemented: a fire prevention unit to inspect public buildings regularly for compliance with State safety laws; and an inspection unit to inspect new buildings and assure safe installation of fuel storage tanks and heating systems. Late in 1970 Boxford entered into a mutual aid agreement with other Essex County fire departments. Dry hydrants to augment natural water sources were begun in the late 1960s. Under a Planning Board regulation of 1981, subdivision developers are required to construct dry hydrants, where needed, with a year-round water supply. Locations of the water supplies are numbered and logged in at the Communications Center so that any piece of equipment can call in and locate the nearest source when necessary.

Open burning is prohibited by State law except between January 1st and a variable date in early spring of each year. Therefore, Fire Department officers make the decision each day of the burning season on whether or not winds or other factors make it unsafe. Permits are available on approved days at the Police Station.

Fire Department quarters were dramatically upgraded with the building of the West Fire Station, dedicated in 1976. Demolition of the old fire house was done by members of the Department, who burned the building on a Sunday morning in 1975, an event so unusual that it was covered by the wire services and appeared in newspapers as far away as San Francisco. The new East Fire Station was completed in 1983, so that both buildings are now highly efficient and should serve the needs of the community well for many years. Both have been planned for eventual use by a full-time, permanent de-

partment, with a chief's office, communications room, kitchen facilities, meeting room, and space for sleeping quarters in each building.

The Emergency Center facilities at the new Police Station have also been up-dated steadily, enabling the Fire Department to keep pace with the most modern communications equipment. The Chief's vehicles and the pumpers have transceivers, which can be taken out of the vehicle at the scene of a fire and be used as portables. All vehicles have two-way radios.

Upon completion of the street numbering system in 1973, the Department delivered a telephone sticker to each household showing clearly the emergency telephone number and the assigned house number. The correct number for each house is listed at the Emergency Center, a system that has been invaluable in locating the site of any emergency.

Archer French, then Fire Warden and Forest Warden, was appointed Chief of the Fire Department in 1936 and held the office for over 25 years. Upon his retirement, C. Richard Cunningham was appointed, and in 1966 he was succeeded by Charles Killam and Dave McGarr. John Mulcahy was Chief from 1976 until his resignation in 1981, when Damon Dustin took over the job, a position he currently holds.

As of 1985 the Department consists of 30 active fire fighters, including six lieutenants, three captains, Deputy Chief Peter Perkins, and the Chief Damon Dustin. Equipment consists of two Class A pumpers, two tankers, two forestry vehicles, and two rescue rowboats.

Fire-fighting skills are maintained and improved through continuing formal and informal training sessions. These are held every Monday night and are an integral part of the Fire Department's activities, ensuring the high level of protection available to the town today.

Police Department

Maintaining law and order was apparently not a big issue for the town prior to the mid-1900s. Early town reports indicate that there were two constables, one in each parish, and two truant officers. In the 1920s "special police" were added to provide emergency and protective services. By 1931 the only special policeman was Arthur Phillips, who still lives on Mill Road in the house in which he was born. Each man was issued a police badge but bought his own equipment, which might have consisted of a billy and/or a gun. The number of these men fluctuated as needed.

The first appointed chief of police was Clayton Nelson of West Boxford. The title was also carried by Tom Cargill, Sr., who held the office for a year during World War II. That the town was a quiet one can be attested to by Cargill's report on patrolling the streets on the night of VJ Day. Expecting to see some celebrating going on, he found there was no gathering of people and no "undue activity."

Chief Nelson remained in office until the appointment of Nathaniel (Nate) Love in 1950. Despite the fact that his budget for the entire year was only \$500, he took the job very seriously. A very big man with broad shoulders, his appearance in uniform must have had an impact on miscreants. This was probably the case when a young man one day shot a squirrel off of Nate's television antenna—while Nate was in the house.

In 1960 it was voted to convert a section of the town building adjacent to the town hall for use as a police station, complete with cell. Most of the furnishings were contributed by residents. The officers, still called special policemen, included six men and a matron, Ethel Walker. During this time, the routine of night patrol from midnight to 5 a.m. was instituted, and several of the officers improved their knowledge and skills by attending lectures on police law and procedures. A sure sign that the expenses were rising for this small depart-

ment can be seen by the need in 1962 for a new cruiser, a purchase that cost the town \$2,141.

In April 1965 Nate Love resigned as chief in anticipation of a move to Maine. David DiTomaso was then sworn in as the town's first full-time police chief. His stay was brief, and he resigned in 1966. During his stay, however, he arranged for use of the then vacant Aaron Wood School as a temporary police station.

The present chief, Douglas Warren of Topsfield, was sworn in soon after DiTomaso's departure. In August of 1967 the police department was moved to the small building across from the First Congregational Church. This building, belonging to Horace (Hap) Moore, had long served as the East Boxford Post Office. It was suitable for its new purpose, providing public space at the front and adequate office and storage space at the rear.

In 1969 Chief Warren hired the first clerk/operator, Alice Farnsworth, for the department. Two years later, the Red Line operators and equipment were moved into the building, the first step in creating a central communications system, which had been voted on and partially funded back in 1966. The speed and efficiency of this operation were improved by the change, and the Department of Public Works and its vehicles were later added to the system.

For many years one of the cruisers also served as an ambulance. It was equipped with resuscitators donated by Dave Waters. Officers and firemen took First Responder training courses to better enable them to handle emergency medical situations.

Gordon Russell, the present deputy chief, joined the force in 1970 and later succeeded William Howard as sergeant. The department's workload escalated during the 1970s with an increase in automobile violations, alcohol and drug abuse problems, and house break-ins, necessitating the addition of two officers in 1978.

Eventually state requirements made it necessary to discontinue the use of the cruisers as ambulances. Nevertheless, all officers still become proficient in first aid in addition to their other skills. Chief Warren takes refresher courses to maintain his Emergency Medical Technician status, and Officer Ronald Giovanacci is also qualified. Members of the force continue to expand their abilities with courses in fingerprinting, breathalyzer testing, law, and court procedures. The three women in the department attended a matron course in Southboro in 1983.

A Police Station Building Committee was appointed in 1972 to plan a new police station on a site at the center of town. Construction was completed and the station occupied in 1975, providing much-needed space for police functions and for the Central Communications Center. Private household security systems were first connected to the center in 1971. In 1983 almost 600 alarms were responded to and checked. Many of these alarms were triggered accidentally by pets, visitors, or by power failures, but prompt response resulted in apprehension of some housebreakers.

At the end of 1984 there were, in addition to the Chief and Deputy Chief, seven patrolmen and seven reserves. In addition there were three specials—Alice Farnsworth, Betty Shaw and, to assist in enforcing regulations at the landfill, Alerson Noyes.

At the 1985 Town meeting voters approved bringing the number of full-time men up to 10.

Although the town retains its rural nature, there are few quiet days for the police. They answer a great variety of calls, ranging from capturing roaming horses to attending to problems at Masconomet High School. There is continuous night patrol during severe winter storms and subzero temperatures. And assistance is readily given to neighboring communities when needed. The town does

not escape crimes of violence, but the officers are trained and competent to handle these matters as well as the most ordinary duties.

Communications

The 1941 study of the town noted that "telephones are available wherever they are desired." In the event of an emergency it was possible to telephone either store and have the proprietor sound an alarm of fire or other emergency. At that time many men worked within the town and could respond quickly. The alarms were whistles—one of them salvaged from an old steam engine. They were operated by a limited amount of compressed air, so that the last round was apt to end with a sad, mournful groan. An electrically operated signal device was among early equipment acquired.

The telephone system itself was flawed by the many different lines that in place of which emanated from Haverhill, Salem, and North Andover. The service was inflexible, and many close neighbors became a "toll call." To reach the east center a call from a household in the 352 exchange passed through Georgetown to Haverhill and thence back to Salem. The Salem operator relayed the call to the Topsfield exchange, where the operator put the call through to the Town Hall, school, or whatever. The shortage of manpower and materials during World War II made maintenance of lines and equipment difficult, resulting in many breakdowns as well.

Police Chief Nate Love set up a Blue Line with a telephone in his home and that of Sgt. Sederquest. The members of the Fire Department, to whom prompt call and fast response are of utmost importance, consulted many times with telephone company personnel on ways to improve service, to no avail. In 1966 the Red Line was established. Charles Killam, who later succeeded Richard Cunningham as Fire Chief, instructed four housewives in the proper procedures for handling fire calls. They ascertained the exact location of the fire and what

kind of fire it was before sending out the alarm. Each store and each of the Red Line operators had a telephone for this use only.

One woman at a time took responsibility for a full week and did not leave her house without arranging for another operator to take over during her absence. The first four operators were Harriet Cunningham, Beverly Perkins, Arlene Parkhurst and Ione Gould.

In 1969, at the instigation of the Finance Committee, which was concerned about duplication of personnel and equipment, a committee was appointed to study communication needs and to develop a unified system. The committee reported that the existing Red and Blue lines, with radio alert and mobile units, were dependable but far short of foreseeable future needs. They also recommended prompt inclusion of the Highway Department in the system. In October of 1970 a Communications Department was established with F. Richard Shaw as director. He is responsible for selection and maintenance of equipment and operation of the town's communications system.

In July of 1971 an emergency center was set up in a small room in the Police Station on Georgetown Road. At first only police and fire dispatch were provided, but shortly afterwards the Department of Public Works radio network was added. Monitoring of house alarms was added at this time.

Upon completion in March of 1975 of the Police/Communications building at 285 Ipswich Road, all equipment was moved to the new building. A ninety-foot antenna at the Department of Public Works garage assures good coverage to all parts of the town. In 1980 a new radio communications console was installed, which provides state-of-the-art capability for all emergency communications. In 1984 funding was provided for the purchase of a multi-channel recorder to replace the separate recorders, and for a computer terminal to tie the center

into the State Police network. Mrs. Harriet Cunningham and Mrs. Elizabeth Russell are dispatcher and supervisor, respectively.

There are standby generators at both fire stations, the Communications Center and the Department of Public Works, so that the system is fully operational during a power failure. The system works so well that it has become a model for other towns and is a credit to Mr. Shaw and to the community.

Boxford's Response to the Wars The American Legion

Boxford was so situated at the time of the Indian wars that it did not experience the dreadful depredations of other areas. However, the General Court decreed that "every man of suitable age and with the proper qualifications" had to give eight days a year to military drilling. The first call to service by Boxford men was in 1675, when they were sent to protect the frontiers near Sudbury. Captain Samuel Brocklebank and Joseph Bixby were among the twelve men sent; eight lived to return.

Boxford's part in the Revolutionary War was one of fortitude, bravery, and patriotism. In 1765 when the Stamp Act was imposed by Great Britain, the townsmen met to instruct their representative, the Honorable Aaron Wood, "to join in no measure contenance the Act." They also resolved to lessen the use of "all foreign superfluities" and adopt in their place commodities of their own manufacture. In 1774 the Provincial Congress, anticipating an open break with Great Britain, gave orders to have the whole Province armed. Out of a population of about 900, 142 men volunteered, making one company of minutemen and two companies of regular militia.

On April 19, 1775, Boxford farmers heard the alarm-gun sounded in Andover, when news was received there of the attack on Lexington and Concord. They hastened to their meeting place, and the three companies marched

to Lexington. Although they arrived too late to fight, they joined others in pursuing the retreating British forces.

With the British troops so near in 1775, coastal towns stored their ammunition inland; Boxford was the repository for Salem and Beverly. The following year when powder and bullets were getting scarce, Boxford and other towns began manufacturing their own. Permission was given to remove dirt from under the meetinghouse in the East Parish for saltpeter. In 1801 it was voted to build a powder house, which was located at the top of a hill near the junction of Baldpate and Ipswich Roads. Lydia Barnard, who is said to have captured the first prisoner in the Revolutionary War, later became a Boxford resident by marrying first the Honorable Aaron Wood, and after his death, Benjamin Spofford. She is buried in Harmony Cemetery, with an appropriate marker. The American Legion decorates her grave each year and also the grave of Alice Austin, a very patriotic woman who did much to raise funds for the Spanish American War Monument.

In the War of 1812 two companies of militia, one from each parish, became active and were inspected and reviewed. Not much was done by Boxford to aid the government in this war, however, because the townsmen didn't consider it to be in the best interests of the people.

The Civil War, usually referred to in Boxford records as "the Rebellion," brought a patriotic response. At a town meeting in 1861 it was voted to furnish each volunteer such clothing and other things that he might need, and to pay him during his elementary drill the same amount that his pay would be in regular service. Further bounties were voted in July and August of 1862. Ninety-two men from Boxford enlisted as volunteers, 30 were drafted, and 5 entered the Navy. This made 127 men from a population of about a thousand. This prompt response might have been due in part to Governor John Albion Andrews' close association with Boxford. He was a descendent of one of the first settlers and had grown up in Boxford along with some of the men who were enlisting.

At the junction of Willow Road and Washington Street in the West Parish stood the historic Morse-Parker house, which was occupied at the time of the Rebellion by two families. From these two families, nine sons volunteered for service to their country. Two brothers Phineas and Daniel Spofford, also from the West Parish, fought on opposite sides at the Battle of Antietam. They are buried on either side of their father, a veteran of the war of 1812, in the Mt. Vernon Cemetery. The monument to soldiers who served in the Civil War was erected in West Boxford in 1875, with funds given by Jonathan Tyler Barker and other residents. Ninety-seven names are listed on this memorial; of these, 25 died in the war.

On both sides of Ipswich Road in East Boxford between Georgetown Road and Depot Road, there was an important training field known as Camp Stanton. For many years afterward, there were traces of the circular ditches dug around the tents and the remains of a stone oven where bread was baked.

Five Boxford men volunteered in the Spanish-American War in 1898; in 1934 the townspeople erected a monument in their memory, located to the left of the Civil War Monument. John Rodney Parkhurst fought at the Mexican Border in 1916. Thomas Cargill, Sr., who did not move to Boxford until 1940, also went to the border after training at the Boxford campground.

In World War I Boxford more than filled her quota. Thirty-two men served in this war as soldiers, sailors, and marines. Part of the old campground which lies south of Ipswich Road was used again, with a new name: Camp Curtis Guild. At one time there were as many as 7,000 men encamped there. An impressive "welcome" program for returning service men was held on November 11, 1919 at the First Parish Church, and in 1934 the Village Improvement Society of West Boxford erected a monument to these men on the grounds of the Second Church. It is planned now to remove this monument to stand to the right of the Civil War Monument. Three Boxford men were lost in the First World War: Franklin T. Cooper, Ernest W. Foster, and Robert W. Lake.

Three Boxford men were lost in World War II. They were Marshall A. Foster, Lewis R. Haynes, and Frank H. Spofford, Jr. Eighty-seven men and women were enrolled in the services. As in other communities, this war involved everyone in town in one way or another. There was Red Cross work to be done, plane spotting, service on draft and rationing boards, nightly blackouts and compliance with rationing rules. Rationing was applied to some foods and clothing, as well as to gasoline and tires.

In 1976 for a Bicentennial project, the American Legion donated a new World War II monument to the town, which was dedicated on Memorial Sunday, May 30.

A small group of Civil War, Spanish-American War, and World War I veterans, calling themselves the West Boxford Veterans' Association, sponsored the Memorial Day exercises each year from 1907 to 1945. Alfred K. Nason was the last veteran of this group and organized the parades until 1943.

The Boxford Post of the American Legion was organized in 1946 and took over responsibility for the parade and Memorial Day observances. They decorate veterans' graves throughout the town and carry flags to each grave site, including one remote grave in a family cemetery on Bald Hill and also the solitary grave of Jacob Perkins, a survivor of the Revolution who died of small pox on January 11, 1777. It was customary during the epidemic to bury victims quickly and away from any place where the contamination might be spread.

On Memorial Day Legion members march to each cemetery, including "the ancient cemetery" near Mill Road. Brownies and Girl Scouts carry fresh flowers to the veterans' graves. A rifle volley is fired, and two buglers sound taps.

On November 26, 1967, Marine Lance Corporal James L. Melvin of Boxford was killed in action in Vietnam. In his honor the Post changed its name to "The James L. Melvin Post, American Legion."

In 1985 the Melvin Post has an all-time high membership of 80 members, an increase of 47 since 1976. They continue to serve Boxford's veterans, donate time, effort and money for civic activities, and organize parades for Memorial Day services. The Legion's scholarship fund, started in the early 1950s, has increased to the extent that two years ago (1983) all Post awards were doubled, as was the support to the Cub Scout Pack.

In 1985 the James Melvin Post gave the town two new monuments to honor the Boxford men and women who served in the Korean and Vietnam wars; 35 in Korea and 102 in Vietnam. The World War II monument had been placed in 1975 on the green opposite the Holyoke French House, and the new monument was placed at the same site. It was dedicated on May 26, 1985, during Boxford's tricentennial year, and at the same time the green was also named in memory of Corporal Melvin.

The formal military ceremony and impressive program attracted many residents. Senior Vice Commander Ronald Holgren officiated, and the Commander of the Department of Massachusetts American Legion delivered a meaningful address. Many uniformed veterans were present, and the Masconomet High School provided music. It was a solemn and memorable event.

The Town Farm

The Town Farm on Baldpate Road was built by Captain William Perley for his home in 1763. (He was a captain at the start of the Revolution and led his men at the Battle of Bunker Hill.) His son inherited the house and in 1825 sold it to Jacob Towne, who in 1847 sold it to the Town of Boxford for an Almshouse. From 1885 to 1902 it was operated successfully by Charles Perley and his wife. It was self-supporting and provided a safe shelter for those in temporary need, or the elderly or ailing. It also gave a night's shelter to foot travelers, some returning from military service, others seeking work or a place to settle.

These transients slept in a shelter at the back of the building but were appalled to learn that a selectman must give written approval before they could eat or sleep, and that it was a good 3-mile walk in either direction, east or west, to a selectman's home.

The farm's usefulness was continued when William M. Wood of the American Woolen Company purchased the property in 1919 for \$19,300 for use as a vacation spot for mill employees and their children—a humanitarian concern unusual at the time. From 1927 until 1954 it was called The Happy Health Camp and served as a fresh air-camp for Lawrence children.

The property was purchased in 1955 by Moses Alpers and Dr. Maurice Shulman, both of whom had summer residences in Boxford. They had some of the early paneling removed and taken to England, where it is in the "Perley Parlor" in the American Museum in Bath. Unused for several years, the house became a hazard and permission was given for the Boxford Fire Department to burn the house, an exercise in fire fighting and in protection of nearby buildings. Later the three-story barn was burned by vandals.

The proceeds of the sale to Mr. Wood in 1919 were invested in United States War Bonds and served as a source of funding for special expenses for over 60 years. Withdrawals of principal were voted by residents; interest accumulated was spent similarly or used to reduce the tax rate. A sum of \$2,000 accumulated interest was given to each of the two libraries, an early vote specifying that interest was to be allowed to accumulate until a suitable library building could be constructed for each. This vote was changed several times and settled finally on the right of the libraries to withdraw accumulated annual interest. In 1965 the Treasurer reported Treasury bonds to a value of \$6,500 still on deposit, with accumulated interest of \$10,000.

The library fund still exists, interest now payable to the Town Library, but The Town Fund is memorialized

only by the faithful recording each year of the balance on hand, \$4.10. The Town Farm has benefited the town and many individuals for one-hundred years.

The 220 acres of land on the southeast side of Baldpate Pond are under consideration by the State for purchase for an undetermined future use.

1960s

At a town meeting in 1960 it was voted to appropriate \$875.00 to celebrate the 275th anniversary of the town's incorporation. Commemorative plates were designed and sold. The celebration was held in the gymnasium of the Masconomet High School, which was well filled for the occasion, and ended with a round of lively square dancing.

Selectmen were Raymond Perley, Harry L. Cole, and John G. Bolton. The budget for the year was \$350,387—to be augmented later by the vote to spend \$221,000 for building and equipping an addition to the Cole School.

The Planning Board, whose first members were Simeon Pearl, Warren Godfrey, Charles Cotton, Charles Nelson, E. Laurence Colby, J. Warren Chadwick, and William Dorman, had engaged the services of Mr. Charles W. Eliot, Planning Consultant. By year-end several maps were at hand; topographical, existing land uses, historical features, and wetlands were among the subjects individually mapped. Robert B. Parkhurst was in charge of providing material on land ownership. Mr. Eliot's study of the town's resources and many historic features did much to guide its residents through the rapid growth in later years. He proposed leaving the two "classic town centers"—the crossroads center and the village green—untouched and establishing a municipal center between the two. This proposal did not materialize fully, but his report provided recommendations and information that contributed greatly to the town's continuing charm.

Recreation Committee

A Recreation Committee was established in 1960 to investigate what facilities were available or could be acquired for recreation. Use of the beach on Baldpate Pond was arranged for with the cooperation of owners Moses Alpers and Maurice Shulman. The land could not be purchased, but the beach area was made available for swimming classes in the mornings and for residents' use later. The First Congregational Church operated the programs and there were life guards on duty. It was not until the purchase of the 7.4 acres at Stiles Pond in 1974 that the town had its own monitored swimming area. It is operated by the Boxford Athletic Association, and the costs are met by paid memberships for the season.

Conservation Commission

The first Conservation Commission was appointed in 1960. Its members were Winthrop Haynes, Seth Kelsey, Stuart Harris, Stephen Maddock, and Mrs. Marie Pinkham, who later resigned and was replaced by Mrs. Dorothy Woodbury. Their first year was spent in attending instructive meetings and in locating and mapping streams, wetlands, and other areas that might need to be safeguarded. They were soon to become fully occupied with enforcement of rules governing soil or gravel removal or drainage problems, and in efforts to acquire valuable open space to protect wetlands and aquifers. In 1973 the number of members was increased from five to seven.

A major accomplishment was the purchase of 279 acres of land that reach from Herrick Road to the edge of Stiles Pond. Purchased in 1974, with State assistance, it is known as Wildcat. Its trails lead through a variety of terrain, trees, and wildflowers. Like the State owned property on the northeast side of Baldpate Pond, it is closed to motorized vehicles.

Earl O. Lathem, an outdoorsman and ardent conservationist, accepted appointment to the commission in 1967 and continued until 1984. He was chairman for many of those years, and was honored at a retirement party at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Simmonds. All earlier commission members were invited to attend. The shared enthusiasm, comparisons of experiences and miles walked, and of goals attained made the event seem like a family reunion.

Essex County Greenbelt Association

In 1960 purchasers of land on Bald Hill suggested at town meeting that the upper part of the hill would be suitable for a winter recreation area if an access road could be built in part through the John Phillips Wildlife Reservation on the Middleton Road side of the hill. Although almost all residents were unreceptive, it was Doctors Stephen and Charlotte Maddock who took immediate action. They called a meeting of conservancy minded friends at their home, among them Stuart Harris, Anna and Winthrop Haynes, Jack Peirce of Topsfield, and Henry Sawyer of Middleton.

This well-informed group gathered the support of appropriate State agencies and pledged to give an equivalent 240 acres of land if the State purchased the area under consideration. The Department of Natural Resources considered the land an appropriate purchase, and their decision was reinforced by the offer of the additional land. It was at the Legislative hearing on the purchase that Dr. Stephen Maddock referred to the need to create "a green belt" around urban areas. The Essex County Greenbelt Association was founded in 1961, and some 60 acres of land were added to the State's purchase, with other gifts following. Gifts of woodlands, salt marshes, and complete farms have brought more than 2,500 acres of Essex County land under the protection of the green belt that originated in Boxford. Greenbelt holdings extend as far north as Gloucester and increase each year. Boxford residents are among those who contribute land

or who support the program by membership. Mrs. Rosamond Price Gowen has contributed important parcels from the Ingaldsby Farm acreage, and Dr. Josephine Murray put 35 acres of her family's Cleaveland Farm into the hands of the Greenbelt under a conservation easement.

Gas service came to the town in 1962, and the position of Gas Inspector was established. In 1965 a committee was appointed to study the advisability of a town water system; a second committee was appointed to study space needs of town officers and departments and to make recommendations on whether to renovate existing facilities or plan new buildings.

In 1965 \$100 was voted for use in microfilming and preserving ancient town records. Winthrop Haynes, Miss Ruby Nason, and Miss Winnifrid Parkhurst were appointed to the task, and by year's end records of transactions prior even to the incorporation had been put on microfilm. No cataloging was done at this time, and in 1979 and 1980 Mrs. John (Dorothy) Truman spent many hours at the Town Hall developing a catalogue of all the material so that information could be retrieved from the vast number of documents. A new microfilm was made in May of 1980. A duplicate is at the Ingalls Boxford Document Center in West Boxford, and a set is also stored in Iron Mountain in New York, a repository designed to preserve documents in the event of war taking place in the United States.

In 1966 the two private library associations merged their collections to become the Boxford Public Library, a town agency. The books and buildings of the private associations were leased to the town for a dollar a year.

Tracy Flagg, of Danvers, was for many years the town's Sanitary Engineer, responsible for the quality of the water in new wells, location and drainage of septic systems, purity of water in ponds and swimming areas, and many other health matters. He resigned in 1967, and an agreement was reached with other boards of health

to establish a Regional Health District consisting of the towns of Boxford, Topsfield, and Wenham. The agreement went into effect in 1968, and John R. Romanski, R.S., was designated Director of Health. His office is in the Topsfield Town Hall.

In February of 1968 the townspeople voted to approve the debt of \$1,950,000 to construct and equip an addition to Masconomet. This was Boxford's share of the amount authorized by the Regional School Committee. In June, at a second meeting, 100 voters approved funding of \$476,408 for an addition to the Spofford Pond School. Education continued to have a high priority in Boxford.

When Clayton Larrabee resigned from the Board of Selectmen in 1969 there were four candidates for his unfinished term. Ruth Race won handily and became the town's first woman member of the Board. There was lively discussion for a few days about a proper title, but she signed her reports simply "Chairman." She was re-elected in 1971. Mrs. Race put much effort into organizing the existing and expanding functions of town government, in improving highway safety, and in numerous areas of municipal responsibility.

This last year of the 1960s was marked by two 18-inch snowfalls two weeks apart. The First Congregational Church was host to a busload of people stranded in town, and Masconomet was used by Civil Defense on February 9 and 10 to shelter and provide food for more than a thousand people. Snowmobiles were relatively new at the time, but teams from as far away as Hamilton and Wenham patrolled Route 95 to bring people in from their stalled cars.

In October Selectmen's meetings were changed from 5 p.m. on Fridays to 8 p.m. on Mondays. The new town garage off Spofford Road (now called the Department of Public Works) was completed and occupied, the first building of the proposed new municipal center.

The first and only liquor license in Boxford was approved by the Selectmen and granted by the Alcoholic Beverage Control Committee. It was for the Far Corners Golf Course in West Boxford and has created no problems in the ensuing years.

1970s

The changes that took place between 1970 and 1980 had more effect on the community than the events of the previous 20 years. New schools and other buildings had been constructed. Committees were at work trying to provide for future needs. The death of Harry L. Cole in May of 1970 was felt as a personal loss to those who knew him, not only to Boxford residents but also to state and county officials who had dealt with him through the years. Knowledgeable about the town and well versed in governmental procedures, he served the community for many years with wisdom, patience, and concern. He was a full-time selectman for much of that time.

The Town Hall staff most days consisted of Mr. Cole, seated at a long table in the room on the north side of the building, and Miss Barbara Perley, Town Accountant for 31 years and also Assistant Town Clerk for many of them. She retired in 1972 and was honored by her many friends with a reception and dinner in June of that year. Actual retirement did not come to her immediately; she was still called upon for advice and assistance. Mrs. Robert (Lucy) Parkhurst had been appointed assistant to the treasurer in 1944 and then became Treasurer. She served for 23 years before retiring in 1967. E. Laurence Colby, Town Clerk for 23 years, retired in 1972, and his duties were handled by Barbara Perley and Mrs. Norman (Mary) Meeker until the election of Mrs. David (Audrey) Ladd in 1973. Selectman John Evans did not elect to run for a fourth term, after nine years in office, and Carlyle Thomas was elected in 1972.

The presence of David M. Burns, USN Retired, as the first professional assistant to the selectmen, helped

alleviate the increased work load at the Town Hall, which had now expanded to include the south side of the building. A second telephone line had been added because of the many incoming calls; every facet of daily operations seemed to accelerate.

In addition to attending meetings, working on a new budgeting system, and assisting residents with problems, Mr. Burns also implemented the house-numbering system, a time-consuming undertaking. Devised by then Finance Committee member Carlyle Thomas, it was based on 100 numbers per mile, emanating from the town centers, with odd numbers on the right and even on the left. Open frontage was included in the measuring so that the correct number would be available should a new home be built in the future. Numbers are now assigned by the building inspector, but the first numbers were established by hours of driving over the roads with a carefully calibrated speedometer. A young lady working under the CETA training program kept records of the numbers. The system has been successful, not only as a help to one's guests but also as an aid to emergency vehicles. In 1980 a bylaw was passed forbidding the display of an incorrect number.

In 1973 Clinton E. French retired as Highway Surveyor after 27 years in the Highway Department. He had recently organized the Department of Buildings and Grounds as an added function. C. Richard Cunningham assumed the responsibilities until the proposed Department of Public Works could be voted and implemented. "Richie" had been with the Highway Department for 20 years, and his father B. Robert Cunningham was Highway Surveyor for 30 years. There had been two surveyors — east and west — until Mr. Cunningham's retirement in 1965. The first Superintendent was Thomas F. Greene, who still holds the position. Because few men work in town during the day, he and other trained department members respond to fire calls.

An additional function was added to the DPW with the establishment of the sanitary landfill — known for

many years as "the dump." No garbage was allowed, and it was a sort of social center on weekends. When Harry Cole and Carlyle Thomas met on the road in 1966, Mr. Cole said, "We've appointed you to the Finance Committee. I can swear you in now if you like." And, on acceptance, "Take off your hat and raise your right hand." It is a cherished remembrance of earlier days and ways.

The modern sanitary landfill is a constant concern, partly because of use by nonresidents, dumping of improper materials, and disposal of demolition refuse. Mr. Noyes salvages newspapers and scrap metal, which helps cut down the volume of material to be dealt with. The landfill operates in compliance with Board of Health regulations and the much more stringent state standards.

In the early 1970s the Boxford Village Garden Club initiated a recycling program at the dump. It was a time of fuel shortages and energy saving efforts. Conserving or recycling materials became a national interest.

Two Historic Districts were created in 1972, one at Howe Village and the other in an area around the East Parish center. A similar historic area was proposed within the West Parish but was rejected by its residents. The Historic District Commission, which must include one member who lives within the district, must be informed of any changes visible from the road, so that there will not be inappropriate changes or additions.

The year 1973 presented a challenge to all departments because the fiscal year was extended by six months, to June 30 of 1984, to conform with the State's change. It was also the year when the gasoline shortage had a serious impact on the town's operations as well as on commuters. The West Parish store reserved the last 200 gallons of gasoline for use by town vehicles, but deliveries to the two stores were often delayed, and police cruisers, town trucks, or plows often had to go out-of-town to find gasoline.

In 1977 Frank Weatherby, the Town Clerk, was elected to his first term and took on his duties with an enthusiasm and dedication that have not flagged under an ever-growing mass of records, registrations, and numerous town meetings. The Council on Aging worked on establishing information on the needs of elder citizens, joined the Merrimack Valley Elder Services Organizations, and in July had a senior aid on duty at the Second Church.

In 1978 Mr. and Mrs. Otis Curtis gave the town a conservation restriction on their 58-acre farm at the junction of Main Street and Ipswich Road, a valuable and appreciated gift.

Townpeople were saddened by the sudden death of "Jack" Johnson who had operated the Village Store in Boxford for over 32 years. His wife Jane, who had shared in running the store, died a few months later in January of 1979. They had made many friends in Boxford and also had provided a home-away-from home for many of the Boston Bruins Hockey team. An informal hockey session was often held when conditions were right at Cadet Pond; and a large and loyal group of Bruins fans developed, following "their" team as far as Montreal on occasion. The Village Store was filled with pictures, signed hockey sticks, and other memorabilia. It was John Bucyk and Richard Ulman who proposed that a ballfield and park to be known as The Johnson Memorial Field be developed at the landfill site. They had help from many people; money was given to a fund, work crews gave time, and equipment was loaned. John Bucyk spent hours with a small tractor loading and carrying away the quantity of rocks that surfaced.

Dedication of the field was part of the July 4 celebration in 1980, and the field was ready for use in 1981. The park, playground, and attractive paths near the tennis courts reflect the efforts of the Recreation Committee, Boxford Athletic Association, and other interested citizens.

New England weather demonstrated its full strength in February of 1978. Snow fell so fast that plows could not keep ahead of it, roads narrowed as drivers abandoned their cars and headed for the nearest shelter. Governor Dukakis declared a state of emergency, and all cars except emergency vehicles were banned from the roads. Boxford's departments operated with utmost efficiency; firemen manned both fire stations around the clock; highway personnel and others who had been hired to help plow worked steadily for 12 to 14 hours before going home for a few hours of sleep, and residents "made do" traveling on snowshoes or on skis to help one another. Doctors and nurses were transported by police cruisers when necessary. The ban on travel was not lifted for several days, but rural towns needed extra time in order to use or borrow a wing plow to push back the high banks of snow and make room for more so that the roads could be widened enough for safe driving.



Bicentennial Celebration

The committee appointed in 1974 to arrange appropriate events for celebration of our country's 200th birthday met early and acted swiftly to prepare for the highly successful Bicentennial program. The first chairman was Town Clerk Mrs. David (Audrey) Ladd. She resigned later in the project, as did Mrs. Joseph (Mildred) Zelinski. Mrs.

Charles (Lillian) Knisely became Chairman. Other members were Richard Hopping, Arthur Schneiderman, Frances Frizzell, Edmond Mead, Mrs. Richard (Judy) Huffsmith, and Mrs. Robert (Dorothy) Woodbury. A medallion contest (won by Rebecca Heeremans) and a Boxford calendar for the coming year were planned. A Colonial Day was held at the Spofford Pond School in October, at which Boxford received the Bicentennial flag from the State Commission and became a National Bicentennial Community. It was a family day with craft exhibits, activities for young people, music by the Bell Choir of the Second Congregational Church, and a colonial dinner served by the Nasons. Many people came in appropriate costume; it was a delightful beginning for the celebration.

In April of 1975 a successful costume ball was held for 400 people at the Merrimack Valley Motor Inn, North Andover. Colonial dance lessons and costume workshops were held before the ball, and many attended the meetings. In September the committee and the Boxford Historical Society co-sponsored the popular Apple Festival. The "Grand Illumination," as celebrated 200 years earlier at Williamsburg, was continued with a huge bonfire on the Cole School grounds. A town crier then led 200 to 300 carolers through the village streets to the steps of the First Church.

The most ambitious project of the Bicentennial Commission was the two week visit of 72 guests from the town of Boxford, Suffolk, England. The idea was suggested to the commission by John and Dorothy Truman who had visited the English village in June of 1975. A special committee organized the visit working with a similar committee in the English Boxford. The Massachusetts committee, headed by Mrs. John (Dorothy) Truman, included Commission members Mrs. Knisely, and Mrs. Huffsmith, and new participants Mrs. Graham (Margaret) Nelson, and Mrs. Edward (Barbara) Hopper.

The British guests were a diverse group and included families with pre-school children and an 80-year old widow. There were tradesmen and executives, civil servants

and artisans. The Community Council of the English Boxford sponsored five young people, and the British Broadcasting Company sponsored a couple.

The two weeks were crowded with activities. There was a welcoming ceremony and concert at the First Church. The special chorus of residents under the direction of Lee Ridgway had prepared the program, which included music of Samuel Holyoke. At mid-point in the visit, there was a private evening visit and picnic at the Boston Aquarium.

Numerous other activities were arranged by hosts and their neighbors. There were trips to beaches and local historic sites, expeditions to Maine, New Hampshire, and even New York City. Olive Tarbet, postwoman of the English village visited with Bernard Schultz, our local postmaster. Mr. George Huntley, a police officer, had a tour of the local court and was made an honorary Boxford patrolman. There were many other activities geared to the interests of the individual guests.

Unexpectedly, the British Broadcasting System sent a television crew over to cover the visit. Wire services carried the story, which appeared in newspapers around the world and stimulated some mail to the committee from some remote corners of the globe. The farewell event was a picnic supper served at the George Hildebrands', preceded by an attempt at a cricket match and countered by a try at baseball by the English guests. An exchange of gifts and courtesies was recorded by the BBC. The lovely watercolor of Boxford, England, hangs in the Selectmen's office of the Town Hall. Ice cream was served by the Bensons, and official goodbyes took place at the Second Congregational Church.

The project was a grand success and the farewells quite emotional. Many of the friendships made that summer have continued, and Massachusetts Boxfordians have since visited the village in Suffolk, England, to renew and continue those friendships.

The Historic Document Center

The Bicentennial Committee gave townspeople a succession of happy events based on earlier lifestyles and depicting to a degree New England's contribution to the early history of our country. Perhaps the most enduring accomplishment during the year and a half was the creation of the Boxford Historic Document Center in what had been the Ingalls Memorial Library in West Boxford. By agreement between the owners and the Commission and Selectmen, it became a center for collection and care of historic documents, photos, and artifacts. Funds voted by the town and matched by the Massachusetts Bicentennial Commission were augmented by the Ingalls Association and individuals to create a much valued town resource. The building itself is part of Boxford's history and is particularly suited for its new purpose. It was equipped with a humidity control system, alarms, and a vault-like archive room. A great deal of material was received immediately and classified by Mrs. Willa Paulsen and later by Miss Margaret Lane, the present archivist. The collection continues to grow and a dedicated group of assistants, including Mrs. Rosamond Price Gowen, whose father designed and built the structure, come weekly to help with inquiries and record keeping. There are many visitors, as well as numerous inquiries from a distance, often sent to the Town Clerk.

Mr. Richard Hopping gathered a talented committee to help create a large-scale relief map of Boxford's dwellings and roads as they existed in 1776. Displays of various subjects are prepared for the Center or in connection with meetings within the community. Microfilms of the earliest town records are stored here, as well as past issues of the local *Tri-Town Transcript*. A microfilm reader is part of the equipment.

The Doll House

The Doll House was a later addition to the historic collection. In 1980 the Ingalls Memorial Library Association made a place in the small building formerly the

West Boxford Public Library for the Parkhurst collection of dolls started by the late Miss Blanche A. Chadwick when she was 70 years old. She decided at that time to dispose of the four dolls which had given her so much pleasure as a child, but her niece Amy Parkhurst urged her to keep them and start a collection. (Miss Chadwick was aunt of Amy Parkhurst and great aunt of Gertrude Parkhurst.) Friends brought her their own dolls and sent others when they traveled. After her death in 1950 Amy and Gertrude continued to collect dolls and chose to have them remain in Boxford. Summertime is an excellent time to visit them, to browse among the dolls and then go down the street for some homemade ice cream at Benson's.

The Document Center and Doll House are open on Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

1980s

The Town Hall was sandblasted in 1979 and repainted. Architect Philip Briggs, a member of the Town Hall Renovation Committee, offered to prepare a plan for space use and renovation of the building. Donald Scutiere accepted appointment as Town Counsel, and the position of Assistant was upgraded to Executive Assistant, which allowed a greater range of activities by Jeffrey Zagar, incumbent. When he resigned in 1981, our present Executive Secretary, James A. Aylward was appointed. He has a degree in Political Science, a Masters in Public Administration, and a background of work in the political arena. Small town problems may be different and sometimes harder to resolve, but his skills have served well to help the Selectmen deal with the multitude of diverse problems that confront them each week.

1980 was a presidential election year, but Proposition 2½ would in any event have brought out a large number of voters. The proposal in Massachusetts followed a similar one in California, where it was called Proposition 13 and where the State had amassed surplus

funds of more than 5 billion dollars. Three of the proposals were: termination of binding arbitration; terminating autonomy of schools; and requiring reimbursement for costs imposed by state legislation. The so-called tax cap attracted the greatest interest. It specified:

- (1) the tax levy on personal property and real estate should not exceed \$25 per thousand dollars of full valuation;
- (2) that municipalities with a tax rate higher than this should decrease the tax levy by 15 percent per year;
- (3) That a municipality with a tax rate under that specified could not increase the rate by more than 2½ percent per year, and could not exceed the prescribed \$25 per thousand dollars.

Proposition 2½ had been debated and discussed thoroughly, and took effect immediately. Some communities already in excess of the \$25 cap took prompt action to cut existing costs or delay proposed expenditures in order to cut 15 percent from their personal property tax rate. Others, like Boxford, found that their frugal budget of the year would grow too slowly at 2½ percent to meet foreseeable needs. Many communities undertook immediate reductions, but operation under the rules did not start easily. If read too quickly, the language could be misinterpreted. Few people were prepared for the loss of revenue that resulted from the reduced automobile excise tax — in Boxford's case, \$160,000. The escape route available was use of "available funds" or the stabilization fund. Free Cash, which is generated by revenue in excess of expenses, is now restricted to a specified amount. A two-thirds vote is required in order to go to bond for the large expenditures necessary from time to time, but this does not come under Proposition 2½.

Many beautiful homes have been built in Boxford in the past 25 years, and much land developed, so that the tax base is broader. However, expanded services and costs coupled with inflation make it difficult to go back to the "pay as you go" principle of 25 years ago. Department heads and the Finance Committee go over budgets carefully in the months before Town Meeting to bring in as economical a budget as will meet the needs of the community.

A permit was issued in 1980 for an addition to the Village Store to provide for a small branch bank, and the following year changes were made to provide a similar service at the West Boxford store. 1981 was the year of the first sizable gypsy moth invasion for many years, not only in a major part of Boxford but in other communities as well. Those whose houses and porches were covered with the caterpillars and their sticky webbing hosed, scraped and trapped. As in other afflicted communities, aerial spraying is not popular with residents, and although discussed and investigated, it was rejected by voters. Assured by knowledgeable people that so huge a population could not survive, would self-destruct, the choice was "wait and see." The advice was accurate and there has been no such infestation since.

The second year of Proposition 2½ was managed without any cuts in service, department heads and the School Committee having made every effort to keep expenses at a minimum. Charles Killam, selectman for nine years, did not run for another term and Mrs. Enid Thuermer was the successful candidate. Interested and informed in government functions at many levels, she continues in office in 1985.

This year, 1982, the town offices were removed to the Aaron Wood School building. Refurbished by DPW personnel and by contractors under their supervision, office rooms were carefully planned to provide adequate space for all departments. The departments most used by residents or visitors are easily accessible.

The Recycling Committee reported a high of 87.2 tons of glass recycled, and "washed and squashed" cans were still being accepted. The Town was on the move — the Post Office completed plans to move into the Community Store, the new library building was open, and the new fire station planned. It was completed in 1983 and an open house held on October 8 of that year.

Although the restraints of Proposition 2½ seemed more of a problem in 1983, voters approved an appro-

priation to purchase the 31 acres of land, with buildings, that had been operated as a Girl Scout camp for many years. Known as Camp Sacajawea, it is reached off Main Street and fronts on Stiles Pond. At the same meeting, the town accepted the gift from Mr. Morss of about 10 acres of land, near the Wildcat area of Stiles, known as "Nobody Swamp."

When Essex County adopted the one-day jury trial system, the town's Jury Box was retired after over 150 years of service. It had been the custom to select the requisite number of people from a street list, with some regard for age, health, and availability. The random choice required was accomplished by writing the names on individual slips of paper, perhaps 2½ inches square, rolling them up tightly, and fastening each with an elastic band. The small locked box was kept in the safe and opened with its key at a Selectmen's meeting when jurors were called for.

Disposition of the old firehouse, highway garage, and the Town Hall were problems to be faced. Mr. Greene was concerned about the ball fields being over-used (as many as 600 games scheduled during a year) and recommended additional fields. With 53 new homes built or under construction, there were also permits for 10 barns, and 43 householders received permission for additions.

A committee was appointed to plan the celebration of Boxford's 300th birthday in 1985. Charles E. Killam accepted the chairman's responsibilities. Among other members were Frank M. Weatherby, whose duties as Town Clerk did not allow him enough time to continue in the planning, and Leroy Curtis, who moved out of state before completion of the celebration.

Selectman Chairman Enid Thuermer described 1984 as "a very good year." Many issues were resolved at Town Meeting, and although James Getchell, a life-long resident of Boxford, resigned after only a year on the Board of Selectmen, Robert W. Conroy, a member of the

Finance Committee, came forward to be elected to fill the vacancy. The Greater Lawrence Education Collaborative had refurbished and made some alterations to the Sacajawea buildings, and "Camp Stepping Stone" carried out a very successful program there during the summer.

There were 52 articles in the warrant for the annual Town Meeting. At the first session 432 voters attended. The recurring issue of K-12 — regionalization of these grades — brought out many voters. The proposal was defeated by 257 to 160. The ongoing problem of unused Town Buildings was disposed of by voting funds to raze the old fire department complex, and by voting, 148 to 132 negative, to appropriate funds for architectural plans for renovating the old Town Hall for community purposes. These decisions and votes did not come easily, being fully debated on the floor. The meeting adjourned at 11:13 p.m. to resume the next evening.

At this time a proposal to create an elderly housing district was sought. The Planning Board had prepared a set of conditions to be met and supported the proposal; Craig Falk made a detailed presentation of the purpose and need for older residents to have the security of such a residence in their own community. There were many doubts and questions from the floor before the favorable vote of 273 in favor, 100 opposed. There were many other articles to consider, and Moderator DeWitt Minich asked those still present at about 11 o'clock whether they would prefer to adjourn or stay to complete the remaining articles. The vote was to stay, and the meeting adjourned at 11:57 p.m.

It does not seem irrelevant in bringing to a close the narrative of events and changes in Boxford to mention the continuing number of new homes, 69 in 1984, and the concurrent increase in barns, 12, and also note the coming of solar systems among the inspectors' reports, two in 1983 and four the following year. Wood stoves

continue their popularity, 24 inspected in 1983 and 34 in 1984. In trying the new, Boxford does not cast aside the old.



Tricentennial Events

The logo above was designed by Mrs. Kenneth ~~Judy~~ ^{Brenda} Stickney and was chosen from those submitted in competition. This year it shares space with the Town seal on municipal stationery.

The Tricentennial Committee met regularly to plan and orchestrate the eight-month program that culminated on the birthday date, August 12. Chairman Charles E. Killam did a masterful job of appointing committee members and other residents to carry out the varied and successful festivities throughout the year. Members were John (Stu) Haywood, whose unexpected death in July was mourned throughout the town, Ethel Houser, William Paisley, Jr., Jack Pearl, Barbara Perley, and Dorothy Woodbury. Mrs. Helen McKay Killam attended all meetings and did yeoman service as the Committee's secretary.

An early proposal by the Committee was that roadsides and the many small areas at intersections would be groomed and made attractive. Mrs. H. B. (June) Baldwin undertook organization of the program and found a host of interested people. The DPW loaned some of the summer help and a truck when needed, as on the day that 14 small plots were planted or provided with tubs of flowers. Garden Club members and others donated plants and work. An unknown donor set in trees; a gift of money was used to provide geraniums at the Com-

munications Center, and Harriet and Richie Cunningham volunteered to take on responsibility for watering them. By spring residents could take both pleasure and pride in the town's appearance.

Tom Cargill and DeWitt Minich were in charge of the Birthday Ball in January. The balloons and bottles and general decor indicate that they had help from the distaff side. Plans were made for 500 guests; space was limited, and an estimated 500 more, who applied for reservations too late, were disappointed to have missed the festive evening, described as "a bash."

In February a winter carnival was held at Stiles Pond, the only occasion when the weather failed to cooperate completely; Charlie had to truck in extra snow.

In April a traditional bean supper held at the Spoford Pond School was followed by a hilarious mock Town Meeting, the articles drawn from some that had been presented at Town Meetings in the years 1918 to the 1940s.

The Boxford Village Garden Club presented a flower show, "Three Centuries in Boxford," at the east library in April, using early materials and artifacts. The American Legion's services and dedications on May 26 were a very special event and attracted a large attendance. It is further described in the section on "The Wars."

There were concerts, emphasis on historic features at the June Strawberry Festival, and a photographic display by Peggy Nelson at both libraries.

Independence Day, July Fourth, has always been the occasion for special celebration, but Boxford's huge bonfire at Stiles Pond the night before the Fourth was unique in the town's history; it will probably not be equaled for many years. The parade that followed the next day, also managed by Charlie Killam, brought cheers from the spectators, not only for the many skillfully prepared floats but also for the many marching units.

Later in the month the Stiles Family Reunion was held, its headquarters the Second Church. About 200 people, some from as far away as the southern states and California, attended. A bus transported the visitors back and forth to a picnic outing at Stiles Pond. This was the families' 30th reunion and the second to be held in Boxford.

The pace quickened when hot air balloon rides were offered in Barbara Perley's field across the street from the Little Red Schoolhouse. While parents and children lined up to take rides in baskets, friends strolled the fields and visited. Jack Pearl was in charge of this unique event, which was so popular that at dusk 50 people were in line waiting their turn.

On August 12, the "Birthday" date, the Nasons served a chicken barbeque at the Spofford School, an opportunity for children as well as adults to share in the closing festivities. An orchestra at the DPW building provided a wide range of music for dancing on the tarmac apron. Nobody asked for a minuet, but music was available on request for the dance styles of the 1940s and 1950s, and jitterbug was as available as disco.

An unforgettable fireworks display started at 10 p.m. under clear skies. Bill Paisley, Jr., was in charge of the display, which included a large, firey "Happy 300th Birthday" set-piece. The viewers who watched from higher vantage sites saw the sky filled with colors and shapes and whistles in addition to the booms, but they missed the hundred or more youngsters racing over Johnson Field with luminescent hoops and loops in all colors.

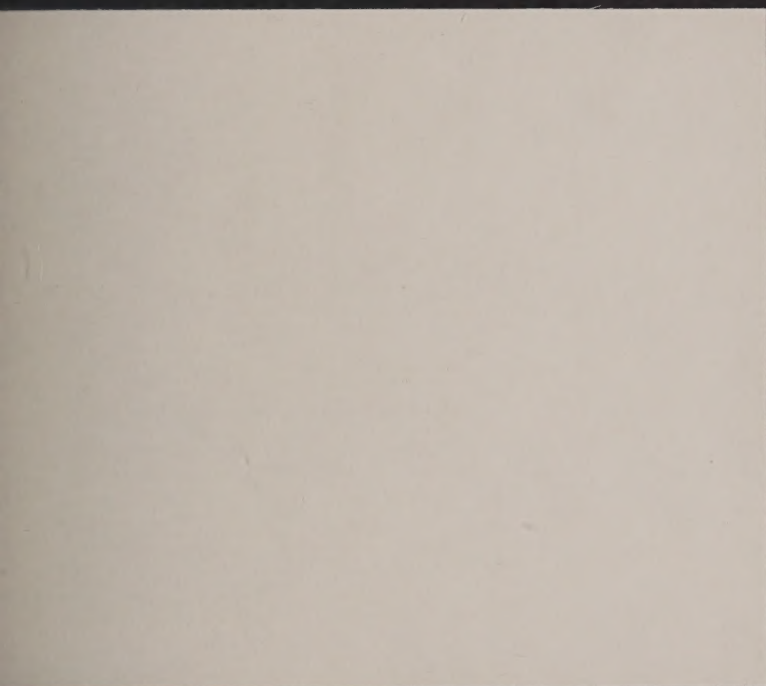
The party is over, but there remains dedication of a new park at Spofford and Ipswich Roads, the traditional Apple Festival on September 21, interment of the time capsule, and receipt of the awaited updated history to complete the town's biggest and best celebration.

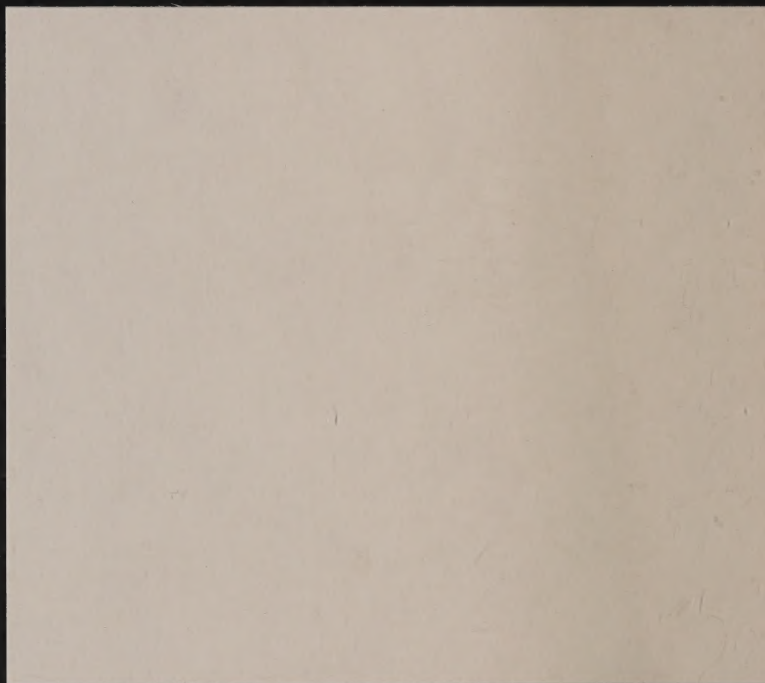
Much of the material in this book is focused on the 25 years since 1960. Only 15 years ahead Boxford will observe the arrival of the year 2000, which already has a sort of mystique based on anticipated discoveries and technological advances. As today's community is the product of the people who live here and of earlier residents, so will Boxford's entrance into the twenty-first century reflect the efforts of those who live here now and those still to come. If the pace of the past 25 years, as compared to the previous 100 years, continues, retaining the town's character will require great thought and effort.

May Boxford enter the twenty-first century confident of its basic values, meeting the necessary changes with good will, and remaining a united community working in the interests of the town.

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- Boxford Town Library - Both Libraries have up-to-date and early Town Reports, in addition to a quantity of reference material.







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